The Australian
WOMEN'S WEEKLY

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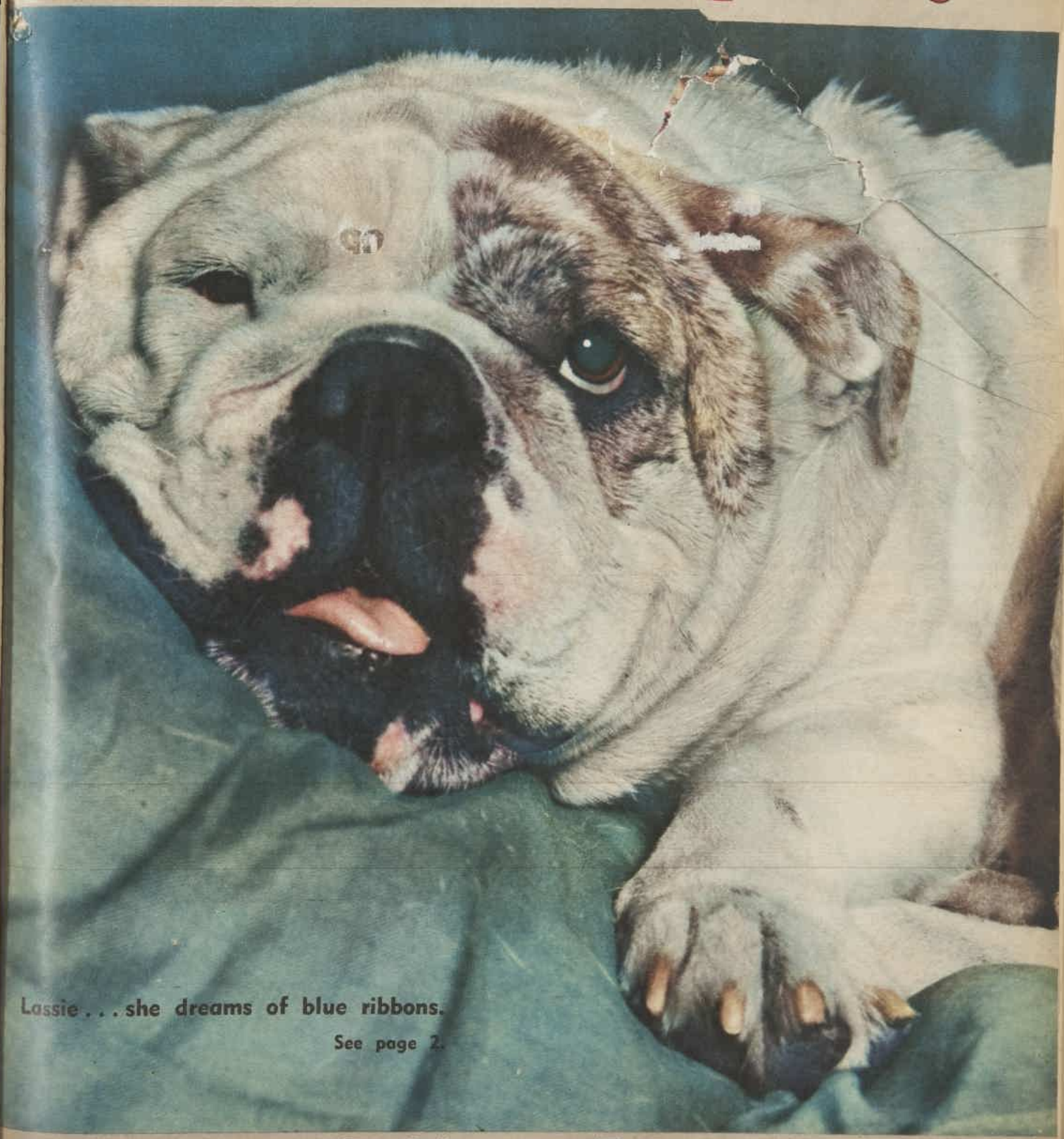

Lassie . . . she dreams of blue ribbons.

See page 2.

Royal Show Features

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The Australian WOMEN'S WEEKLY

April 7, 1954 — Vol. 21, No. 45

2 APR 1954 — NEW SOUTH WALES

THE HIKING HOUSEWIFE

WOMEN will not be altogether astonished by the estimate of the Victorian Master Plumbers' Association that the average wife with a family of four spends seven years of her life cooking.

"It feels longer," might well be the unsurprised comment of any mother, adding: "And what about the time spent in considering the eternal question, 'What pudding shall I give them tonight?' "

The plumbers, in their survey, estimated that this average housewife cooks about 55,000 meals during her married life and walks nearly 3000 miles a year in the course of her daily duties.

The 3000 miles per annum is perhaps the most startling figure of all.

That expenditure of energy and shoe leather would take the little woman across the continent.

Instead of the sights which such a hike would provide, her scenery is confined to the kitchen cupboards, the clothesline, and the dust under the living-room lounge suite.

Still, many travellers find that scenery isn't everything.

Often it is pleasant company which makes the difference between a dull and an enjoyable journey.

Similarly, the housewife's journeying is made worth while by the company of her husband and children. If they are appreciative of her efforts, and if they express that appreciation, she finds herself well rewarded.

In fact, what she really asks in return for that seven years of cooking is a few thousand words of encouragement from those who eat the results.

Our cover:

● Known as Lassie to her friends, our cover girl has the full name of Croxley Lasses II. She is a two-year-old bulldog bitch, owned by Mr. George Folpp, of Cabarita, N.S.W., and will be shown at Sydney's Royal Show this month. When staff photographer Eric Donnelly took the picture, Lassie, a gentle dog, clearly disliked the flashlight. Instead of making a fuss, she adopted a policy of passive resistance, turning her head away slowly each time she saw a new flash coming. Time and patience won, however, and Lassie now enters the ranks of pin-ups.

This week:

● Now that the Royal visit is over, the paper resumes its customary form, opening with fiction. Opposite is a short story by William Saroyan, the celebrated American author who, incidentally, wrote the lyric for "Come-on-a-My-House," the hit number which made Miss Rosemary Clooney's name in America.

● Freda Durham, writer of the story "Emma" on pages 8 and 9, is in private life Mrs. Frank Hooper, of Hawthorn, Melbourne. She chose her pen-name from her birthplace, Durham, England. She was formerly a lecturer in speech and drama at a Victorian teachers' training institution, has written educational scripts for broadcasting, and collaborated in writing six French plays for children published by the Oxford Press. "After which," she told us, "'Emma' (a story about a mannequin) may seem rather out of character."

Next week:

● You'll like the nine-page feature devoted to table settings in next week's paper. It includes several circular cloths and runners, designed and made specially by our fashion artist, Rene, and photographed in color.

"The Venus Death," next week's lift-out novel, is by Ben Benson, one of America's leading mystery novelists. Its hero is a young State trooper who meets a blond girl in a bar, and, through the chance meeting, becomes involved in a murder.

don't let drying skin give you a 'getting-older' look

Drying skin often begins to show after 25 because the natural oil that keeps skin soft and fresh starts decreasing.

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POND

Letters from our readers

I HAVE read an article in your magazine called "Worth Reporting" dated March 17, in which you stated that you had inspected a new British car with folding back seats, no boot, etc. From your description I am sure this car is the same make as mine. I am particularly interested, as you said you experienced difficulty in getting out from behind the steering wheel and would require to diet to do so comfortably. Being an owner of one of these cars, I feel I must come to their defence with my own experience. I tip the scales at a little over 16 stone and am approximately 6 feet tall. Only yesterday I returned from a holiday on the South Coast and travelled quite comfortably with my wife and three children and a considerable amount of camping equipment, so I do feel quite justified in voicing my opinion on your comment.

F. Jose, Gladesville, N.S.W.

I AM, I hope, tolerant of the high spirits of youth, but horseplay, rowdiness, and checkiness by both boys and girls in public vehicles makes travelling a daily ordeal.

Henry Goddard, Rockhampton, Queensland.

I AM 21 and my annual holidays are due in July, when I plan to go on a skiing holiday. I have saved up for this for nearly three years now. I was very excited when a boy who lives near us, and with whom I have gone out occasionally, said he was going to the same place for his holidays and would plan to be there at the same time as me. Well, my mother says I can't go if he does. I cannot see the difference in staying at the same place as a boy from my own suburb whom I know and going out with him, and meeting other strange boys who will be there and who will, I hope, ask me to dances and parties.

Mary Cottrell, Bendigo, Vic.

THE AUSTRALIAN WOMEN'S WEEKLY

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PERTH OFFICE: 46 Stirling Street, Perth. Letters: Box 491G, G.P.O.
TASMANIA: Letters to Sydney address.

I READ with trepidation that the Cumberland County Council is actually considering a proposal to erect a National Opera House in the Sydney Domain. In my view, it is wicked to even think of encroaching any further on our public parklands. These were set aside in the first place so that citizens could have quiet peace and enjoyment close to the crowded city. The early governors had the foresight to set aside the Sydney Common. Planners who came after them have whittled it away with the Showground, the Cricket Ground, the Sports Ground, and the Sydney Girls' High School, until now we have only Centennial Park left. At the rate we're going that will be only the size of a pocket-handkerchief soon.

Frances Kennedy, Potts Point.

I THINK that something should be done about so-called "animal lovers" who keep dogs in flats. I live in a flat area, and these poor unfortunate animals are cooped up and taken for a nightly run in a nearby park. Apart from the miserable life the animals lead, they make the park into a most insanitary state.

L. Hodgkins, Elizabeth Bay, N.S.W.

FISHER'S PHOSPHERINE

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When his mother called out "Barney" he went into the dining-room, with the dog and the hen in his arms.

It had taken him a very long time to save up enough money to buy...

The Bike

By WILLIAM SAROYAN

THERE was a hen hiding under a parked car on Van Ness Avenue, in the heart of town, on the first rainless day after eleven nights and days of storm, after the floods; and three cars farther down the street there was a small dog hiding under another car.

Barney never would have noticed them on his way home from the public library if they hadn't been so upset about something. The hen was making noises that were for all the world almost human; and the little dog, a common lost dog not more than twice the size of a cat, was whimpering the same way, making almost the same appeal.

He'd passed up the hen, astonished that it was there at all and half believing it must belong to the owners of the car, and then he came upon the dog.

It was after six, the streets were almost deserted, he was late for tea. He'd been to the library, examining the whole place—not one book, not one shelf of them, but the whole library, looking into one book after another, as if he were in search of something and knew what it was, but just couldn't find it.

Whenever he was at the public library and got to searching that way, he forgot time and tea and everything else, sometimes feeling glad about his luck, about drawing nearer to what he was looking for, and sometimes feeling depressed and miserable, believing his search was hopeless. He hadn't been there once during the storm and the floods. The excitement of the weather ran through the town, the State, the whole nation, and he did his share of work at the swollen river.

He rode out to Skaggs Bridge on his bicycle one afternoon in answer to a radio appeal, riding six miles in heavy rain. There he got on a lorry with twenty others, none of them under 16. He was 12, and eager to prove that 12 years are enough to help in a flood.

The lorry travelled over muddy roads along the river until it came to where the river was nearest flooding over. The men all smoked in the lorry, and the boy took a cigarette when it was offered and tried his best to smoke it.

He stayed with the men from five in the afternoon until one in the morning, and worked as hard as any of them. He stopped for coffee and sandwiches and doughnuts only when the others did, and together they put up a high bank.

But when the lorry got back to the shop at Skaggs Bridge, where he'd left his bike, the bike was gone. He came near to bawling, because he'd bought the bike with money it had taken him a long time to save, and he loved it. Besides, he needed it. He rode to school on it.

He hadn't believed that there would be anybody in the world in weather like that—in the worst storm in a whole century, during a time of flood, when he had gone to the trouble of riding all that way to help—who would want to steal a bike.

It just wasn't a time to be mean or to take advantage or to steal. In other weather, it might be half-human to go off with somebody else's bicycle; but he didn't think anybody alive, having lived through the storm, would have had any interest at all in taking off on somebody else's bicycle.

He asked the old man in the shop about the bike, telling where he'd put it and the kind it was. Not a new or fancy bike, it was one he'd bought from Paul Saydak, who'd been rebuilding bikes for 20 years in Fresno, working in the barn behind his house, on Oleander Avenue.

It was a lean bike, but strong, and Paul Saydak had let him have it for 27 dollars, although Paul said it was one of the best

To page 10

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The gipsy in the parlor

Concluding our delightful serial by MARGERY SHARP

LOOKING back now, I can see that, from Fanny Davis' point of view, I precipitated things when I rushed to my aunts with the news that she was cured. She herself had been impulsive, even rash; had sprung too soon to her feet, too soon let me run to spread the glad news. Now that the question of telling Stephen had come up, she had to make the best bargain she could.

I had no idea of any bargain to be made at all, I was simply intensely interested; and being not absolutely driven from the parlor, let my Aunts Grace and Rachel quit it without me; saw Fanny by a look admit my presence; and so hovered at the door.

"Dear Mrs. Toby," said Fanny Davis, "what I have to confess is a tale of love . . ."

And out she, suddenly tearful, sobbed it; and as I now resume it—to me no less astonishing than to my Aunt Charlotte—I see it all explicable, and the whole gist of it to be summed, in the phrase that equally sums Fanny's character.

She knew how to seize a chance.

She didn't put it like that herself.

"It was love at first sight, dear Mrs. Toby," wept Fanny Davis. "Between one dance and the next, between one figure and the next, we read all, in each other's eyes. The French call it the coup de foudre."

So that was what had happened at the Assembly: Fanny Davis and my Cousin Charles fell in love. They looked in each other's eyes and were lost to all—save possibly, on Fanny's part, to the main chance. If so, with what boldness and resolution she seized upon it!

She was to marry Stephen in three days. She was at the Assembly as Stephen's bride. Between one dance and the next—between one figure and the next—she not only fell in love, she made up her mind. Did she also, then and there, make up her plan?

She didn't lead us to believe so. She fell sick next day, she assured Charlotte, from pure agony of spirit.

"For consider my position!" begged Fanny Davis. "Not only had I poor Stephen to think for, I had also, a little, myself. The misconstructions I might have been open to, changing from younger to elder! Not in years, of course—poor Stephen!—but so far as concerned all position! To marry Charles, your son, would alter my situation completely, from being last I should be first; and weak, even deceitful as it was to keep silent, Charles himself urged it, till health should be restored."

My father was a barrister. I had enough legal blood in me to realise, dimly, that something was being put to Charlotte. She hadn't asked why Fanny kept silent; if she did, she was answered in advance.

But of this Charlotte herself probably saw nothing. She hadn't yet spoken. She stood exactly where Grace and Rachel had left her, without stirring, letting Fanny talk; needing perhaps so many reiterations—her silence forcing Fanny into repetition—before she could finally comprehend what she heard.

"So you'm betrothed to my son Charles," said she at last. "Be that it, Fanny Davis?"

I thought Fanny controlled a movement of impatience. But her voice remained smooth as silk.

"Yes, indeed, dear Mrs. Toby," said she. "Can you find it in your heart to blame me? He quite god-like in his handsomeness! The French call it the coup de foudre."

"'Tis called something other in Devon," said my Aunt Charlotte. "What of my kind brother Stephen?"

"Stephen," said Fanny firmly, "will understand. I shall always have the greatest regard, the kindest sisterly affection for him; for the very reason that he, of all men, would never wish me to marry against the dictates of my heart. But for my illness making any marriage impossible, Stephen should, of course, have been told long since!"

Again I felt that something was being put. I also, for the first time, realised, as a criticism, that Fanny talked like a novelette. But before I had time to examine either reflection, she had hurried on.

"I see you wonder," pursued Fanny rapidly, "why Charles ever left my side? That I can explain at once. He couldn't endure to see me so weak: the first time he'd loved, his feelings I can only compare to a volcano! He couldn't endure to see me, he couldn't endure not to; and now, though I've assured him again and again that his presence would quite restore me—as indeed the mere account of him has, from our little friend"—here Fanny raised a beckoning hand—"what do I learn now, from our little friend? That poor Charles is so indebted to his landlady—in other circumstances quite laughable—he's not able to leave London!"

My Aunt Charlotte bent on me, as I advanced, a heavy, anxious look.

"Be it true, as Fanny says?" asked she.

I said stubbornly, "No."

Nothing supported me, at that moment, but my affection for Clara Blow. I liked Clara. I loved her—far better, as I'd never till that moment realised, than I loved Fanny Davis. So I said no.

I said Clara Blow, and I was very sorry I hadn't told about her before, was a particular friend of mine; and that she was so good-natured and generous I was quite sure that whether Charlie'd paid her or not, and I thought in a way he had paid her, she would never try and stop him coming home.

Fanny Davis shot me an ambiguous glance.

"Sweet, innocent child!" said she. "Whom neither you nor I, Mrs. Toby, could wish to disillusion! Don't be stupid, dear; naturally Miss Blow wants her money—as naturally as Charles can't compound for it. For if he wished to marry her," snapped Fanny Davis, I cannot but think rashly, "what was to stop him?"

My Aunt Charlotte lifted her head.

"Maybe his parents' consent," said she. "Maybe he still have the grace to ask for that. . . . Do 'ee like this Clara, my dear?"

I was about to say I liked her very much, when Fanny interrupted.

"As Charles and I ask it now!" she cried. "Dear Mrs. Toby, let me be your daughter! To me at least how natural, how sweet the relationship will seem! How far, far more natural than any other! Let your kind, generous heart have its way and welcome me in!"

"My kind, generous heart!" repeated Charlotte. She appeared to consider the words, to examine them intellectually; I, knowing that heart's long battle with Grace Beer, to save Fanny from being turned away, read at last some part of her mind. To have done good, and see evil come of it, was a paradox that so caught as it were her moral attention, she simply set the rest of Fanny's words aside. Or perhaps they too deeply offended her taste . . .

Fanny Davis, after a moment, shrugged.

"Hard as Pharaoh's, I see!" observed she whimsically. "How fortunate that I can console myself with Charles'! When you're a little recovered, shall we discuss ways and means? To take up the money in person will I think be so much the best; and if a matter of twenty pounds, or forty, or even more — to have Charles home again, won't it be amply worth it?"

However veiled, this was a declaration of war. Rebuffed—as she undoubtedly was, no emotional appeal could have fallen flatter—rebuffed, Fanny declared war; and her smile, lifting a narrow lip above teeth so small and sharp, was victorious already. With a pang of dismay, I perceived how sure she was—sure of Charles, sure of herself.

Today, in fact, I see her pretty, emotional appeal as nothing more or less than an exercise in virtuosity. Fanny Davis (again the gloss is today's) took a virtuoso's pleasure in pitting her silver tongue against odds. For once it had failed; but it didn't matter, because she was so sure.

"Train journeys are so remarkably easy," added Fanny Davis. "I dare say I'll have him home before the week's out. . . ."

Setting this aside, too, setting all aside, my Aunt Charlotte slowly turned herself towards the door. I suppose that of all the changes that in the past two years had come over her, this was the greatest; she could no longer be angry.

Only a twelve-month ago, at such a tale of treachery, she would have trampled Fanny Davis underfoot—if not quite literally, then at least morally: loosed upon her such a storm of wrath, such a violence of indignation, that Fanny must have been blown about like a leaf in a gale. Now anger failed her. It was as though, in the long battle with Grace Beer, my Aunt Charlotte had fought herself out.

"You tell I more than I can compass," she said heavily. "I must speak wi' my sisters. Can 'ee get yourself to bed or shall Rachel still assist 'ee?"

"Dear me, no," said Fanny Davis. "Since I may be off to London in no time, I must learn to practise my powers!"

Gravely my Aunt Charlotte nodded, and went out; and I ran after her.

"Aunt Charlotte," cried I, on the landing without, "I didn't know! If I'd known about Fanny and Charles I'd have told you! I didn't know!"

"No more than any one of we," agreed my Aunt Charlotte soothingly. "Do it seem so mistaken a match to 'ee, too?"

I stammered yes, because of Clara. Stammering out more about Clara, and about Charles in London, I grew finally incoherent; my Aunt Charlotte picked me up and carried me to bed. She was still strong enough for that; strong enough for any act of compassion.

But she was no longer listening to me very attentively; already her thoughts seemed withdrawn where I could not follow them; but by her face she contemplated catastrophe. I stopped talking and lay quiet. Whatever had happened, whatever was going to happen, it was no longer a matter for children.

Emotion had so worn me out that I fell asleep immediately. I must have slept a long time, perhaps my full night's stretch; for when I awoke, or rather when I was awakened, it was to the unmistakable lack-life, ebb-tide silence of the smallest hours.

I woke because Fanny Davis was standing by my bed.

She held a candle: its light threw dark shadows under her eyes; her short dark hair, newly brushed, haloed her head with smoke. She was wrapped in Charlotte's paisley shawl, but no plum-color re-

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Clara and Charlotte were just shaking hands on the agreement when Charlie came in, his eyes astonished as they saw Fanny.

flected from it on her cheeks, as they were white as wax.

White-faced, smoke-haloed, Fanny Davis stood over me; and this was the first time I felt afraid of her.

"Dear little friend!" said Fanny Davis softly. "Do I startle you? But wake up, dear; you and I must positively have one moment's little talk."

I pulled myself up, pressing my shoulders hard against the bed-head; Fanny Davis sat down at its foot. Her fingers sheltering the candle were so thin I fancied I could see the bones.

"For you mustn't, you know," continued she softly, "talk quite so much of poor Miss Blow. It may give a wrong impression. It may bring Charles trouble. When he and I rule here, naturally you'll be our most welcome little guest; but not if you've made trouble."

I assured myself I had no reason to be afraid. But I didn't immediately answer, in case my voice should prove less brave than my spirit. Fanny Davis, watching me, smiled.

"Let me help you, dear," said she gently. "If there's still a struggle in that loyal little breast, let Fanny help. I've no doubt in the world Miss Blow did all she could to win your affection, to insinuate herself into your good graces; but consider with what motive? To enlist you on her side in her ridiculous design to marry Charles. That he had no such design is certain—for if he'd wanted to marry her, what prevented him? Certainly not the lack of his mother's consent!" said Fanny Davis, with a little laugh. "It was his engagement to me, dear, which he chose to keep. Now do you see your foolishness?"

I still couldn't answer her. All she said sounded so sensible, so likely; yet it didn't tally with what I knew of Clara Blow. I still thought that when Clara gave me buns it was out of sheer good-heartedness, not to insinuate herself into my graces. The implication in any case was unflattering. Yet had not Fanny herself, in the course of our first conversation of all—which the present, more momentous one so oddly paralleled in night-shaded secrecy—had not Fanny herself sought my favor with a bag of sweets?

Did all adults, in fact, rate all children so low? Did Fanny, in short, know what she was talking about? I had lost confidence in my judgment. I had been so blind, in regard to Fanny and Charles, that my thoughts ran malleable as the wax that slid down Fanny's taper. . . .

If I had strayed far in thought, so it seemed had she. As though forgetting that she waited for an answer from me, suddenly, softly, she spoke again.

"The first night I ever spent under this roof," said she softly, "do you know what an odd thing I did?"

I waited. I waited most eagerly.

"I couldn't sleep," pursued Fanny Davis—almost as though speaking to herself. "I got up and dressed and went out. By the kitchen-entry, like a servant . . . But I walked all round the house. I remember standing under the crab-tree, in the little court below what was then your room, and looking up at the windows. Do you know what I thought, then?" asked Fanny Davis, suddenly bending back to me. "As I stood looking up at this great, proud, overbearing house?"

"Yes," said I. "That you wanted it."

She laughed a little.

"For what? There's the real joke. What I thought, then, was but that I at least would never be its servant. As I saw all Sylvester women, even Mrs. Toby, I thought it better to be mistress." She paused, her face oddly rapt.

"Did my spirit, even then unaware, reach out to Charles? Perhaps," said Fanny Davis softly, "indeed, perhaps . . ."

I stirred uncomfortably. With a swift return to lightness, she laughed again.

"And very knowledgeable my spirit was, dear, for mistress I certainly shall be! Now do I see you deciding to be sensible? I think I do. . . . Always my little friend, from the very first days! And my little messenger to Charles as well—which Mrs. Toby, upon reflection, mayn't find quite so endearing as I do. But you shall always find a welcome with me; and one of the first things I shall do will be to put you back in your old pretty room."

Without, suddenly, a cock crew. Just as I was at last about to speak, to protest I was sure my Aunt Charlotte didn't blame me, I was sure she'd keep on inviting me to the farm for ever, a cock crew; and Fanny, always startled by any country-sound, slipped swiftly to her feet and dipped to my pillow.

"Now sleep, if not beauty-sleep, for both of us!" she cried softly. "Good night, little friend!"—and kissed me, and was gone.

. . . . . .

In one thing at least, among all my misconprehensions, I was perfectly right. I wasn't to be blamed. When I joined my aunts at breakfast their looks were kind, exonerating me; and that although, as I saw at once, they knew.

Charlotte must have talked long overnight with Grace and Rachel; they were grave and heavy-eyed, silent, and deeply troubled. But I was once more in their confidence, as they were in each other's; the realisation helped me through my bread and butter.

As Charlotte cut it for me I saw, for the first time, a clumsiness in her motions; she took up the wrong knife, too blunt, let it slip against the crust and cut her hand; left a smear of blood on the cloth as she pushed the board across to Grace, who received it

To page 43

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He was still too young to understand how hope can sustain life.

The last move

By WILLIAM BRANDON

THE place was a beach town called Capobianco. It was wrapped in fog. At the third traffic light, hanging in a jewel-green cocoon of fog, Dodd turned his car sharply left, towards the sea, and drove in low gear down a steep, narrow street.

A dripping metal sign flung itself up in his path: J. A. Harvey. It pointed to the right. He twisted the wheel, and the headlights picked out a pair of gateposts that slid towards him and disappeared on either side.

The street became a curving driveway, drifted over with sand. A house emerged from the wall of fog. Beams of light stood out from its windows, like widespread arms clothed in white sleeves of fog. Dodd stopped the car and left it in the driveway and groped his way to the house.

He could hear the surf sweeping in and falling on the beach close at hand. The fog enveloped him, wet and cold and saturated with the sweet, salt smell of the sea. He found the door of the house and knocked.

A little boy about four pulled the door open. He was wearing a yellow sou'wester.

Dodd said, "Where are you bound for?"

Dodd was very tall. The little boy looked up at him until his hat fell off. He said, "I can't go out at night. I sail my boat when I wash."

He grabbed up his hat and ran back through the house. Dodd heard him say, "Mom! It's a tall old man with his collar on backward."

A woman came towards the open door from an inner room. She wore an apron over a trim frock.

"Come in," she said. "What an awful fog it is."

Dodd stepped inside the hallway a little hesitantly. The boy's mother looked quite young. Dodd finished wiping his glasses and put them back on, and saw that she was very pretty.

She said, laughing, "You don't look so old."

Dodd bowed his balding head. He said, "I assure you I'm constantly surprised that I am."

She said "Jack's expecting you." She led him through an expensively furnished living-room, where a fire burned in a bronze-hooded fireplace and into a beamed study, lighted by a hanging lantern. Ship models lined the walls. Her husband got up from a chessboard and put out his hand.

He said, "Reverend Dodd? I'm John Harvey." He wore a turtle-neck sweater that made him look like an old print of a boxer. A welter, Dodd judged. He had a square-cut, youthful face. He was in his middle thirties. His wife went out and closed the door.

Dodd said, "I asked to talk to you because I'm looking for information about a man named Robert Jeffrey."

"Jeffrey," Harvey said. He looked Dodd in the eye. "Do I know him?"

"Well," began Dodd slowly, "That's what I was hoping to find out."

Harvey looked questioningly at him and then shrugged his shoulders. "Sit down, won't you, and tell me some more about him."

Dodd sat down at the chessboard. "You were in a hospital with him in England during the war. But he may have used a different name. He played chess."

"Wait a minute." Harvey sat down across the board. He hooked his heels over the rung of his chair and rested his elbows on his knees and put his hands together. "He had a record, or something. Some kind of trouble in his past."

"Yes."

"I remember him. I knew him pretty well, but he did have a different name then. He told me something about it." He grinned. "You can't be a cop, unless you're in disguise."

Dodd chuckled. "No. My interest is unofficial. Jeffrey's mother is an acquaintance of mine."

"His mother is still living?"

"She is. She has not seen or heard of the boy for a number of years, and the hope of finding him again has become an obsession with her. He was arrested and convicted of a car theft, as I recall the story, when he was nineteen or twenty. He was placed on probation and later was convicted, with some older companions, of armed robbery—a service station, I believe. He was then sentenced to prison.

"An unfortunate case, as by all accounts he had shown promise of spirit and brilliance, and his waywardness may have been only a temporary affliction. Before he became eligible for parole, he escaped from prison. He has been a fugitive ever since. His mother has no other family, and she is obsessed with the thought that sooner or later he will return home.

"She happens to be in poor health and confined to her bed, and in such circumstances, I presume, one has a tendency to think too fixedly. I became interested in her problem and have made an effort to trace her son."

"Wouldn't the police pick him up if he went back to his home town?"

"Very possibly. Of course, it's been a long time. The tenor of his life since would have a bearing on the disposition of the case, no doubt."

Harvey got up and walked to the far wall of the room, where a row of windows looked out on the fog.

He said, "I don't know if I should tell you this. It would be pretty hard on his mother to hear it. The guy died in that hospital in England."

Dodd said after a moment, "The hospital was bombed, according to my information. Was that when it happened?"

"Yes. Buzz bomb."

Dodd said nothing. The younger man came back to his chair. "How did you trace him that far?"

"A matter of luck, principally. I found he had learned to play chess in prison, and very well, well enough to win a correspondence-chess tournament. Later, in a chess periodical, I came upon a game of his, played against the grand master, Yodowski, in a simultaneous exhibition in a military hospital in England during the war. He was listed merely as an amateur, an American serving with the Canadian Air Force. I recognised the game."

"You recognised it?"

"I had obtained the scores of his prison games and studied them. He had developed what I believe is a unique continuation in the Evans Gambit Declined. The published game contained this exact variation, resolved in his customary manner. It was unmistakably his, barring a remarkable coincidence.

"I wrote to England and obtained names of American members of the Canadian Air Force who had been patients there. Yours was one of them. But they informed me some of their records had been destroyed when the hospital was bombed out."

"You must have really studied his game."

"Oh, yes." Dodd stood up. "I won't keep you any longer."

"Look, about his mother. I've done well since the war. I've got a fleet of trucks, and now I'm buying into a couple of tuna boats. What I mean is, I've got plenty of money."

"She uses very little money." Dodd rested his fingers on the chessboard and looked at the game set up there. He said, "A correspondence game?"

"Yes. I don't get time to play much with pals."

Dodd studied the game. His long fingers buckled and knelt to their knuckles, came back upright and knelt again.

He stood up. "You have the position that arises from the Jeffrey variation I mentioned."

"That's right." Harvey met his eyes. "He taught it to me."

"Of course. You find it successful?"

"It gives you a red-hot attack. What will you tell her?"

Dodd looked down at him. He said, "I don't know. It may be this hope she still has means more to her than we can realise. Doubtless, it would be like the end of the world to destroy it for her. Perhaps I'd better not tell her anything."

"It's hard to know what's right," Harvey said.

Dodd said, "La Rouchefoucauld makes the rather bitter remark that the love of justice is born of the fear of injustice. I will say goodnight."

Outside the house, in the fog, Dodd waited for a few seconds, and then knocked on the door again. The young woman opened the door.

Dodd said, "I thought I heard a child calling for help down on the beach. I'm sure I must be mistaken."

Dodd pointed to the board and Harvey looked up at him. "That's right," Harvey said. "He taught me that variation."

Her eyes went dark with fright. She called, "Bobby." The fog muffled the sound of her voice. Harvey appeared at her shoulder. She said, "Bobby's gone down to the beach." She called again, on a note of terror, "Bobby!"

Her husband said, "I'll get a light." He turned and ran, and the little boy yelled from inside the house, "What do you want?"

They saw him standing at the head of the stairs. He was still wearing the yellow sou'wester. He said indignantly, "I'm washing."

Harvey stopped in his tracks. He said, "False alarm, Skipper. Go wash some more." He went to his wife and put his arm around her. She closed her eyes and said, "I'm sorry, but it scared me so."

"I know," Harvey said. "Like the end of the world." He looked at Dodd.

"Please forgive me," Dodd said. "Very stupid of me." He turned away.

Harvey said, "Reverend . . ."

"Yes?"

"Tell her I'll see her soon, will you?"

"Why, gladly," Dodd said.

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Emma

"Can I speed up now?" Emma asked John, her eyes on the road. "I think I've got the feel of it now."

IT was one of those pseudo-intellectual parties, John decided; where there was no place for him. At first he'd felt a little humble as the conversation whirled about his ears, and then bored, and finally, as he settled back in a corner and listened, frankly scornful.

Glib phrases were tossed off and Huxley, Toulouse-Lautrec, and Christopher Fry were dealt with and thrown aside in a matter of minutes. If they weren't careful there wouldn't be any subject matter left by 12 o'clock, by which time John would be safely home reading his copy of "The Electrical Engineer" and thankful for peace and quiet.

He searched the room for Peter so that he could say goodbye. That was when he first saw the girl. She was sitting on a cherry-colored divan and, although she seemed to be the centre of a group of people, there was something cool and remote about her.

She was probably the only female who wasn't clutching a cigarette in one hand and a cocktail in the other, and John found himself appreciating the white simplicity of her dress and the cap of smooth gold hair. Next to her, a dark intense-looking youth was holding forth on the subject of Jane Austen, and by concentrating John was able to shut off extraneous noises and listen.

"Trivial. There's nothing to her writing, darling. Just a hotch-potch of village gossip. She was the most limited writer of the nineteenth century and that's saying something."

"Of course she was limited." That was the girl in white. "Nobody realised better than Jane herself, but, unlike most of us, she accepted her limitations, positively flaunted them. Limitations or not, I adore her novels."

Someone had switched on the radiogram and the sounds of a rhumba made further listening imposible, and presently the youth, looking as sulky as an adolescent, moved away and John acted swiftly. The members of the group were dispersing to dance and there was room for him on the divan.

"I've come to congratulate you for defending Jane Austen. May I sit down?"

She looked up and her eyes were direct.

"Of course." She made room and added: "I was afraid you were going to ask me to rhumba and I can't imagine anything more gruesome in a room this size."

John lowered his long body and grinned. "I couldn't ask you, I'm an indifferent dancer at any time and I don't know the first thing about the rhumba. Can I get you a drink, offer you a cigarette, or shall we talk about 'Emma'?"

The girl smiled and she looked very young and not in the least remote.

"Is that your favorite, too? No thank you to the drink and the cigarette. Wasn't Emma adorable and Mr. Knightley the perfect hero for her? I read it when I was fourteen and I made up my mind to wait until I could marry someone exactly like him."

John looked down at her hand. "But you didn't?"

She shook her head, her face thoughtful. "No, I didn't." Then the appealing dimple danced at the corner of her mouth. "Don't misunderstand me," she said with mock solemnity, "but you look rather like him yourself. Tall, solemn, grey eyes, and you don't seem very happy to be here."

John looked round and admitted: "I feel like a fish out of water, but I'm quite content to be here—now. By the way, I'm John Blain and Peter persuaded me to come along. Heaven knows why."

"Emma Curtiss." Their eyes met and they both laughed spontaneously. "Ridiculous, I know, but, you see, my father was a worshipper, too. I have a sister, Elizabeth, and I used to wish I'd been the one to arrive when he was reading 'Pride and Prejudice' instead of her."

After that it was easy. John found himself telling her about his work on the hydro-electric scheme and the questions she asked were eager and intelligent, proving she was really listening; but it wasn't until he was back in his rooms with his magazine lying unread beside the bed that he realised how much of the talking he'd done.

She knew most of his life history and all he'd learned were her name, address, telephone number, and the fact that she'd refused his offer to take her home because she'd promised to leave with Bill, a stocky young man who looked as if he'd make an excellent full-back in any football team.

At two o'clock, after he'd switched off the light, John lay staring at the moonlit tree outside his window and remembering uneasily the letter he had intended writing so that he could mail it first thing in the morning. For a long time he lay there, then suddenly sat up and flicked on the light.

Better get it done, he decided. He couldn't sleep, anyhow, and there would be no time later because he was calling for Emma at 11, so that they could spend the day in the hills. He fumbled in the drawer for the air-letter form and his fountain pen, then started to write.

Although he described Peter's party in some detail, there was no mention of Emma Curtiss in the letter and for the first time John breathed a sigh of relief when he reached the bottom of the page. And he stared at the tree, thinking, until his eyes ached, long after the moon had disappeared.

. . . . . .

Emma lived in one of a block of three flats and when John rang the bell she was obviously ready to leave, with a flat navy handbag and colorful scarf in her hand as she opened the door.

"You're dead on time." She smiled and looked even younger in her white jumper and navy skirt. A saucy-looking navy beret was perched on her daffodil-yellow hair and her eyes were clear and sparkling as though she'd spent a more restful night than he had, John thought ruefully. But he felt absurdly lighthearted as he asked: "Quite ready? Good. How do you manage to look as fresh as a daisy? I had quite a hangover when I woke up."

"I've learned to avoid drinking Peter's 'special' and it was much more restful talking to you instead of struggling to dance." She stopped short. "Oh, what a beauty." Her eyes were on John's low-slung English sports car.

John nodded. "Not very modern, but she goes sweetly enough."

"I learned to drive on a really antique model, the same brand," Emma explained, "so I've felt a great affinity ever since."

"Would you like to drive?" John could hardly believe his ears as he heard himself issue the invitation. Emma was the first person he had invited to drive his beloved car and yet, oddly enough, he had perfect confidence in her ability.

"Not now, thanks. Perhaps later. I'm used to a little car and I'd probably crash your gears, which would be an awful beginning."

John laughed. "To what? The day or our friendship?"

"Both." Emma's eyes met his and then she said lightly: "Where are you taking me?"

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A romantic short story by FREDA DURHAM

"I thought we might go up through Olinda to Emerald if that appeals to you."

"Lovely. I haven't been to the hills for ages."

John drove competently and quickly, and soon the city was left behind and they were on the open road. The car was behaving perfectly and Emma said: "Could I take over now?"

"Sure. Slide across. I'll go round."

She asked one or two questions, hesitated, then let in the clutch, and presently John said: "Is there anything you don't do well? You strike me as one of the most capable people I've ever met."

Emma's golden hair was blown back from her face and the wind had whipped pink into her cheeks. She kept her eyes on the road, and John admired the pure profile and the captivating dimple as she smiled.

"I can't sew or knit. I'm an absolute fool at figures and I've never learned to play bridge. You're just so relieved that I'm not murdering your car that you feel extra kindly towards me. Can I speed up? I think I've got the feel of it now."

"Not over fifty," he warned. "She's beginning to feel her years."

It was Emma who suggested they have lunch at a place she knew. There was no sign to indicate meals could be had and they walked in a garden where thick mountain grass lawns fell abruptly to a creek and great clumps of rhododendrons provided splashes of color.

"Friends told me about it," Emma explained. "Let's go down to the creek. They'll call out when lunch is ready."

She walked with long, easy steps, and John marvelled at her capacity for looking just right in her surroundings. He liked the neat, brown walking-shoes that looked absurdly small keeping pace with his own feet and he glanced scornfully at two women teetering back up the slope in restricting pencil-slim skirts and perilously high heels.

Emma seemed to read his thoughts, because she laughed. "Silly, isn't it? They miss so much."

They sat down on a log and watched the water bubbling over pebbles worn smooth through the years. Talk was suspended and peace folded about them, so that when a vibrant "coo-ee" split the quiet, John's head jerked up with sudden irritation and he saw Emma watching him, her eyes narrowed with laughter.

"Lunch," she announced. "That's the signal. You won't feel so bad when you taste their fillet steak. But it is heavenly here. I'd like to take off my shoes and stockings and dabble my toes in the water."

"Too cold," John said prosaically. "Besides, your talk of fillet steak interests me."

"No soul," Emma sighed as she stood up, stretching like a cat and breathing in the crisp mountain air. "But I am hungry. Thank goodness I was born one of the lean kind and haven't got to diet."

John shrugged his shoulders. "Why bother? Why not just grow fat and comfortable?"

Emma looked at him in horror. "Not in my profession. I wouldn't last a day."

John was suddenly curious. "What is your profession?"

"I'm a model." She was conscious of his look of amazement and added: "It's hard work, and please don't look at me as though I lead an immoral life because I'm photographed in somebody's frocks and furs and stockings. Most people have the craziest ideas about modelling. Actually, you have to keep pretty fit and lead a comparatively blameless life if you want to keep in good condition."

"I'm sorry." John grinned. "It sounds rather exotic and you're the most natural person. I can't imagine you posing, somehow."

Emma glanced up at him, her eyes mocking. "Take care. How do you know I'm not working hard to be the most natural person you've ever met—as well as the most capable?" She took his arm to direct him towards the steps leading up to a glassed-in verandah. "Up here."

"You might be," John admitted. "But I doubt it. I'm not very perceptive, but I feel I know you pretty well."

Emma was preceding him into the room and she looked back over her shoulder. John wondered whether he was imagining it, or was there something veiled in her expression? The smile on her lips hadn't reached her eyes.

"No man knows any woman pretty well," she warned, and then, with a swift change of manner, she asked: "Do you like it?"

John realised she was being proprietary about the room with its apple-green walls, thick grey carpet, and small white tables gay with blue-and-primrose pottery.

"Perfect!" he approved, and after they had eaten fillet mignon followed by enormous red strawberries with thick cream and were drinking unbelievably good coffee, he said again: "Perfect. Emma, you're a wonder. I would have fed you on steak and eggs, fruit salad, obviously from a tin, and weak tea, served in a setting of chipped tables, linoleum, wilting poppies, and gum leaves."

"I know just what you mean," Emma sympathised. "This place is run by an American who doesn't think much of the way we cater for tourists. You must try his afternoon tea some time. Hot buttered cinnamon cake, applesauce spice cake . . ."

"Not now!" John protested. "Besides, if you go on, I'll feel we ought to abandon Emerald and settle down for the afternoon by the creek until it's tea-time."

They lit cigarettes, inhaled luxuriously, and admired the purple velvet mountain framed in the landscape window. Emma was content to sit in silence, and presently John found himself wondering how many times she'd been before and who had brought her.

The thought was like an insidious worm wriggling about his brain and even more irritating as he realised how little right he had to feel jealous of anything that had happened in the past, particularly as there could be no place for her in his future. He had decided last night that there was something he must tell Emma before the day was over. It was unfair to accept her companionship until she knew. After that it was up to Emma.

"You're frowning and thinking dark thoughts," Emma said accusingly.

"Let's go, shall we?" John's voice was rougher than he intended and he added lamely: "The sunshine's having a soporific effect on me. I'd hate to fall asleep before your eyes."

Emma was already stubbing her cigarette. One of her greatest charms was an ability to react quickly to changing situations and John knew that she must be surprised by his abrupt tone and his desire to leave suddenly. But she seemed quite unperturbed and perfectly happy to be driving up the mountain road.

Once or twice she commented on an unusual house or a view of the valley glimpsed through the screen of thick trees, and gradually John relaxed, glancing at her gratefully.

"Dark thoughts all gone?" she asked quietly, and John reached out to cover her hand with his own momentarily.

"Quite gone, thanks. Bless you, Emma."

Towards the end of the afternoon they were sitting on the grass beside the lake at Emerald, looking at the water lapping contentedly round the wooden piles. A breeze was feathering the pool's surface and shrill, childish voices belonging to children swimming near the diving-board were as strangely unreal as though they belonged to inhabitants of another world.

Emma had stooped over the water's edge to wet her handkerchief to rub a muddy spot from her skirt. She was absorbed in her task and looked very young and defenceless, with her hair veiling her face, as she scrubbed away, and John knew that the time had come to tell her. If he didn't speak

To page 73

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he had ever put together, and he said it ought to be worth every bit of 35 dollars.

The old man in the shop, at half-past one in the morning, hardly knew what the boy was talking about; but he understood that the boy's bike had been swiped, and he couldn't help feeling upset about it.

He didn't understand the part about Paul Saydak, but he went outside and let the boy point out to him where he had put the bike. Then he told the boy he hadn't been at the shop at that time, five o'clock in the afternoon, so he hadn't seen the bike at all. He said he would ask about it, though. He went to the driver of the lorry and asked him to get the boy home.

The next day the boy had had to take a bus to school; and the next afternoon he'd had to hitch-hike to Skaggs Bridge to ask at the shop about his bike. But nobody there knew what he was talking about, and he himself felt he was making quite a lot of a 27-dollar bike in weather like that, the river free in a dozen different places, and millions of dollars lost in damages of all kinds.

The bike was gone, that was all. And there wasn't a great deal of interest in the fact that it was gone, or in the circumstances under which he had given anybody the best chance in the world to take off with it.

He'd listened to the radio appeal for help, he'd got on his bike, he'd gone as fast as he could go to where they'd asked him to go, and there somebody had swiped his bike.

"The radio appeal wasn't to you," his father said quietly when the family sat in the living-room after dinner the night after the bike had been stolen.

"I thought it was," the boy said.

"No," his father said. "It was to—well, me, and, of course, I didn't go. Yes, the river is swollen, and it has been raining very hard night and day, and a lot of places are flooded, and a lot of other things. But I don't think they expect you to straighten things out, or even help straighten them out. They expect me to, I think, and—well, I'm too tired.

"By the time I get through eight hours at my desk I'm too tired. I just want to get out of the rain, eat supper, listen to the radio, and go to bed. You might have known they'd steal your bike. You only wanted to help. You might have known they'd do that."

"I didn't think they would," the boy said.

"Well, they did," his father said. "And since they did, and since they had no right to, no right in the world, no right even to be tempted to steal it—

Continuing . . . . The Bike

from page 3

anybody at the shop should have taken it inside and put it away for you somewhere—well, I'm going to buy you a new bike. Any kind you want. Any time you want it. Tomorrow. You pick it out and I'll buy it."

"That's not it," the boy said. "I don't want a new bike."

"Well, you've lost the old one," his father said. "Pick out the one you want and I'll buy it."

"I liked my bike because I'd bought it with money I'd earned myself," he said. He was a little angry with his father for being so angry with whoever had stolen his bike, and with people in general.

He knew his father was sympathetic and did want him to have a bike; but he didn't like to see his father so angry about people and things in general. The angrier his father got with people the kinder he became with the family.

"Perhaps it's just as well," his mother said to his father. "So few boys nowadays ride bikes to school, and motorists are so careless. Perhaps it's just as well he's had it stolen. It's always made me worry. Must you have another bike, Barney?"

"Of course he must," his father said.

"No," the boy said. "I think I'd rather not have one."

"I'm sure he doesn't want a new bike," his mother said.

"Oh, are you?" his father said. He turned to the boy and said, "I leave it to you, Barney. Think about it and let me know. Now, we'll forget all about it."

His father looked at his mother, his sister and brother looked from their mother to their father and then to their older brother, and then his mother sat down at the piano and played an evening song. Soon they were all singing. The song was "Rescue the Perishing," his father's favorite.

He rode the bus to school after that. It wasn't half as much fun as riding his bike, but it was all right. He couldn't move as freely and as swiftly as he'd moved for a year—for the year he'd had the bike. And every now and then he forgot that the bike had been swiped, so that when he stepped out of the house or out of school he beleived he was on his way to his bike and a quick ride to wherever he was going.

Five days after the bike had been stolen he took the bus after school and rode to town and went to the public library.

He took the place shelf by shelf, forgetting the bike and his father's anger about its being stolen. He read parts of plays, short stories, novels, travel books, histories, biographies, and philosophy books. Everything he read seemed fresh and good and new, but not what he wanted, not what he was searching for.

He was in the public library for hours, sitting down at last to read a story, not knowing the name of the story or who the writer was, and not stopping until the story came to a description of a meal, making him hungry.

He looked at the clock and saw that it was twenty past six. His father would be getting home in a few minutes, and supper would start in half an hour. He left the book open on the table and hurried out of the library to the street.

The sky was clear and the air seemed clean and fresh, as if nobody had ever breathed it. If he waited for a bus he might not get home any sooner than if he walked, so he decided to cut through town and enjoy a swift glance at anything he came to, and then get on home. It was a walk of about a mile and a half, but he felt like walking.

When he heard the hen under the parked car on Van Ness Avenue, he couldn't imagine what was making such a sorrowful appeal for help.

Every day the paper was full of stories about strange things that had happened to people and animals during the storm and flood—and, of course, one of the things that had happened, which nobody except him and his family knew about, was that his bike had been stolen—so he felt the noise he was hearing also had to do with the storm, and that somebody or something was hurt or lost or frightened. But he didn't expect it to be a hen, and he didn't expect it to be under a car.

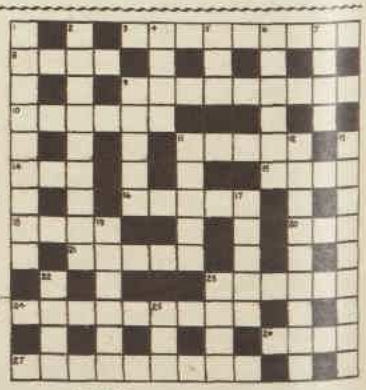
He was some time finding out what it was and where it was, and when he saw that it was a rather big hen under the car, he didn't feel that he ought to try to do something for it. It might just belong to the people who owned the car, and they might think he was stealing it.

But when he came to the whimpering dog he knew it belonged to no one, and he was sure he just couldn't leave it there. He called to the dog, but the dog was afraid of him. It took a good three or four minutes to stop the dog from being afraid.

The dog crawled out from under the car, still struggling with its fear, crawling all the way to the boy. He was very

To page 40

THIS WEEK'S CROSSWORD



ACROSS

3. Possibly a Eurasian (4-5).
8. I study a statue (4).
9. Sloping roof in a closely confined habitation (9).
10. Pieces of furniture with clever interior (8).
11. Helena in "A Midsummer Night's Dream" says that winged Cupid is painted so (5).
14. Spoil a backwards constellation (3).
15. No rat turns into an edible root, yet it does (4).
16. Pulpits of early Christian churches (5).
18. Mischievous lovemaker of a rose (4).
20. Is this a suitable gift for an orator? (3).
21. Hitherto unknown fictitious narrative (5).
23. A boy and a bird in a small bird (6).
24. No, this head covering is not a suitable food for horses or cattle (6-3).
26. Old Ireland (4).
27. Obeisance starting with a midnight rider (9).

DOWN

1. Method of painting for a dog disease (9).
2. Batter with shot and shell on a musical instrument (9).
4. God of war (4).
5. The people who live on this part of the land have the best of everything (3).
6. Full value of a hill (6).
7. Call for an answer after tea to get your lesson to be learned (4).
9. Strike with something thrown, a light buckler (5).
11. Meaningless noise from Shinar (5).
12. If you tell it in Oath, those of the Philistines will rejoice (9).
13. Oppose an insect to be a fighter (9).
17. Sharpen a razor in the back of harbors (5).
19. Put the sun on a card to get comfort (6).
22. Make a hole with a tiresome person (4).
23. Powder in a capital city (4).
25. Before either up or down (3).

Solution will be published next week.

E	C	H	O		P	A	R	O	D
I	S	T		M	O	S	G	V	I
B	R	I	S	K		E	V	I	D
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E	E	R							

Solution to last week's crossword.

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NICE-TO-COME-HOME-TO.

Nielsens

are the best-made slippers you can buy

There's nothing cosier than felt slippers in winter—nothing finer than felt slippers crafted by Nielsen. Look at a pair—see the careful stitches, the beautiful finish, feel the superb materials that have gone to make them. You'll know then why you'll get more wear from Nielsens.

But no need to dig deep to buy them. From 29/11 up you can buy beautifully styled Nielsens—Australia's finest slippers.

Nielsens are obtainable at leading stores and shoe shops throughout Australia

For information about Nielsen slippers, please write or 'phone:
N.S.W. and Queensland—Nielsen Distributors. 8 Small Street, Broadway. MA 9334
Vic., S.A., W.A.,—Feature Footwear Pty. Ltd., 281 Collins Street, Melbourne. C.1048

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Your Skin can look smoother, firmer, younger!

THE NEW COTY

"Vitamin A-D"

COMPLEX-CREAM

can be of infinite benefit to you

Dermatologists call Vitamin A the "skin vitamin" because its presence, as in milk, cream and butter, is helpful in all sorts of skin conditions.
Now Coty blends the "skin vitamin" into a new beauty cream that leaves the skin looking smoother . . . feeling firmer, fresher, younger. **"Vitamin A-D Complex-Cream"**—wonderful for helping to stop age lines around eyes, mouth and throat—valuable in preventing the thickening of coarse skin on elbows, heels, cuticles.

22/6

Care for your skin NOW—and the passing years will be kind . . .

IS YOUR SKIN OILY? Avocado Beauty Milk is the answer — a non-greasy, deep pore cleanser, naturally rich in nourishing vitamins (7/6 10/6).

WORRIED ABOUT DRY SKIN? Keep it lubricated, supple, moist, with Coty CONDITIONING CREAM (9/-), cleanse with CLEANSING CREAM (8/6), tone with SKIN FRESHNER (8/6, 12/-).

FATIGUE LINES AND WRINKLES? Slow to liquefy, Coty WRINKLE CREAM (9/-) prevents and softens tired lines.

COTY

LONDON PARIS NEW YORK SYDNEY

UNCHANGED IN A CHANGING WORLD

VENCATACHELLUM

GENUINE MADRAS CURRY POWDER

JUST ASK FOR "VENTS"

The same Grand Curry Grandma used

NEW SCIENTIFIC DEVELOPMENT

MENTHOID CREME

for IMMEDIATE RELIEF

FROM JOINT and MUSCLE PAINS

Where every slip means danger

The spirit of Sir Edmund Hillary, who thrilled the world with his magnificent conquest of Mt. Everest, is an inspiration to the young men and women of the Sydney Rock-climbing Club, who are planning a Himalayan expedition.

MEMBERS of the Sydney Rock-climbing Club, both men and women, spend their week-ends scaling rock faces in the Blue Mountains, N.S.W. Here a member scales a cliff.

THIS club now has 30 members, who spend most of their week-ends clinging precariously to steep rock faces and hanging over valleys and chasms in the Blue Mountains and in South Coast ranges of New South Wales.

Club members leave Sydney on expeditions on Friday evenings and return late on Sundays. If possible they hitch-hike to save train fares. Meals are cooked and eaten in the bush, and as the climbing equipment is supplied by the club the week-end costs only a few shillings.

Mountain climbing appeals to the adventurous. It is also a test of leadership, endurance, and skill, and those who want to become mountaineers must possess these qualities in good measure.

Members of the Sydney Rock-climbing Club know they must keep themselves perfectly fit, develop steady nerves and plenty of staying power.

President of the club, David Roots, believes that a sound body and an overwhelming urge to climb every rock and cliff in sight are the first essentials.

Given these qualities, he says, the technique of scaling peaks can be acquired from experienced climbers, who are eager to teach new members all they know.

"First we show them how to tie the rope knots used in climbing, such as bowline and fisherman's knot," he said. "Then they must learn to balance on narrow rock ledges as they hang out into space and how to find handholds on rocks practically devoid of crevices. They practise, of course, on ledges close to the ground," he added.

Mr. Roots said that seasoned mountaineers watch beginners closely on their first few climbs and never allow them to get into difficulties.

"We have never had a member stuck on a ledge and too afraid to come back," he said. "Not even a woman.

"Our first concern for members is always safety, and we have never had a bad accident.

"Just now our ambition is to expand and we would like many new members."

When the club members set out for a week-end on the mountains, they wear old overalls and long-sleeved shirts to protect their arms and legs.

The club was formed two and a half years ago by expert climber Russell Kippax, who is a nephew of cricketer Alan Kippax.

He got together eight enthusiasts, including two women, and was elected first president of the club.

Although the activities of the club have so far been confined to N.S.W., members hope to organise a Himalayan expedition eventually.

The main difficulty of this expedition will be paying for it, but the club hopes it will be made possible by philanthropic organisations which have helped alpine clubs in the past.

Pictures on these pages were taken on the Blue Mountains and at Shoalhaven, on the South Coast, N.S.W., by members of the Sydney Rock-climbing Club.

LEADER of the party, who is always the best climber, carries the rope up the cliff face to the top, secures it and himself, and makes sure that the next man, who has the other end of the rope round his waist, will be safe if he should fall. An expert leader never falls. If he did he would endanger the other members of the team of climbers as well as himself.

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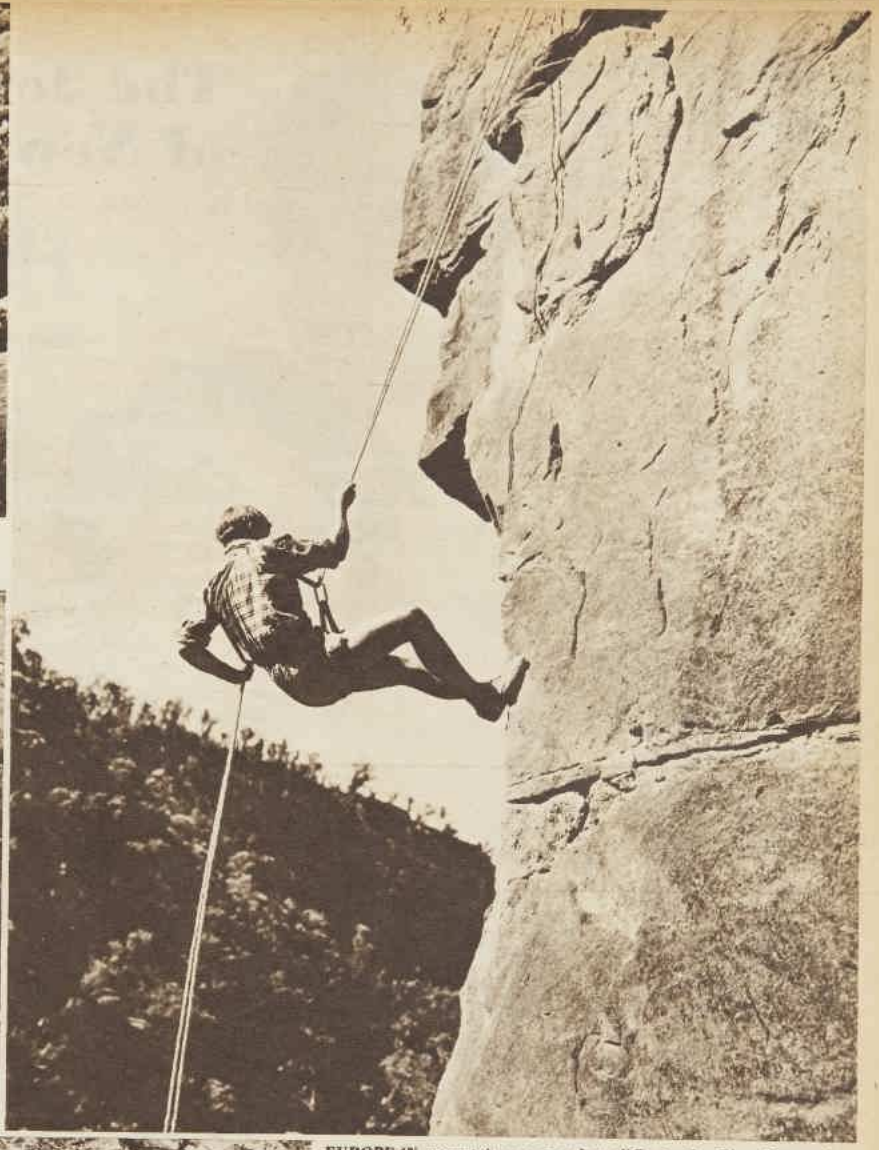
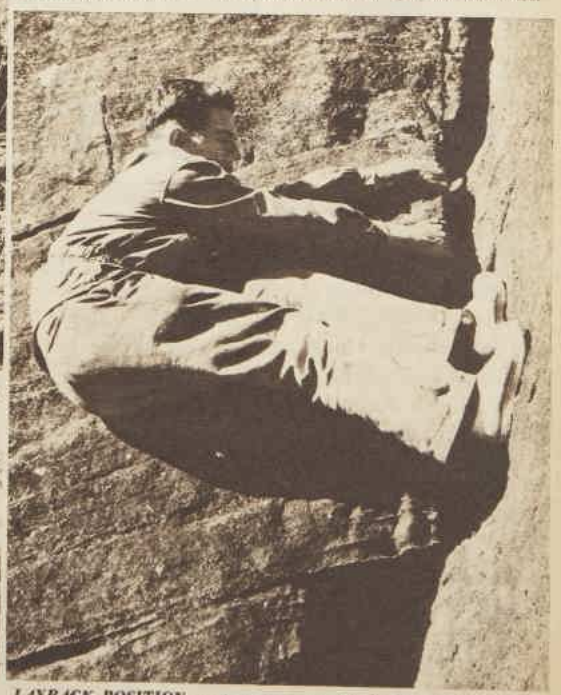
THIS METHOD of descending a cliff is known as abseiling and is very safe. The mountaineer sits in a rope sling, which slides down the main rope line attached at the cliff top, and can control her descent.

TWO GIRL MEMBERS of the club, Myra Llewellyn (left) and Beverley Alcorn, prepare to set out for a climb. At right, Myra Llewellyn with perfect technique ascends a wide crack in the rocks known as a chimney.



EUROPEAN mountaineers say that cliffs in the Blue Mountains like this one are as difficult to scale as some of the more famous climbs to be found in the higher mountains of other countries.

CAVE EXPLORING is usually scheduled for the hot weather. Here is a group of club members photographed outside a cave at Bungonia, near Marulan, N.S.W. The cave has been barred with a grille to prevent cows, horses, and other animals wandering into the overgrown mouth. Most of these cave barriers are now rotting away.



LAYBACK POSITION, a strenuous type of climbing technique, is used for ascending narrow, vertical cracks. Even experts cannot go far like this because of the heavy strain on their arms and legs.

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From **Jantzen**
America to you . . .

The Jewel-Color Sweaters of New York in

FEATHERFLEECE

—the softest wool you've ever handled

These sweaters are *exact replicas* of the beauties they're wearing in and around New York. America's beloved "Campus" classics, the turtle neck sweater with bracelet sleeves, simple crewe-cuts. Colors like Windsor Pink, Fiesta, Grey Mist. You'll fall in love with Featherfleece.

FEATHERFLEECE

for men too

Jantzen takes a soft 100% merino wool, treats it specially, fashions it into sweaters that feel like cashmeres, wear like Jantzens. Finger Featherfleece, rub it against your cheek—there's never been a softer, deeper wool.

Half a dozen new American colors in classic sweaters, simple slip-on styles, cardigans and elegant weskits. The same beautiful Jantzen quality, cut and finish.

This year everyone can afford *a Jantzen American-designed skirt. This one, a box-pleated skirt in fine worsted, is only 99/6. (Price varies slightly in some States.)*

Match or mingle the New York way

Wear a ruby cardigan over a blushing pink sweater, add drama to a primrose sweater with a cardigan of deep emerald! Jantzen makes it easy to be different this year.

Jantzen

Finely tailored for perfect fit

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Jantzens

hold their shape for years—

they're a basic in everyone's wardrobe

For men—our best-seller now in Featherfleece too. Here's the timeless everlasting cardigan that does all a man wants and more—from golfing to business wear—and now you can buy it in wonderful Featherfleece as well as plain merino. Non-sag pockets, action styling, reinforced straining points—typical Jantzen quality.

For women—the tailored sweater. It golfs, it gardens, it goes over a shirt-blouse beautifully (career-women please note). It presides gracefully over afternoon tea, decorates a bridge party. It's pure merino wool strongly reinforced at all straining points.

Jantzen

Finely tailored for perfect fit

Worth Reporting

WE thought the posters by the Swiss artist Carigiet and the Belgian Massonet the most fascinating of all at the travel-poster exhibition arranged by Mr. Frederick Treuthardt, which has been shown throughout N.S.W. and will be seen in Queensland soon.

Massonet is represented by about six entirely different types of posters, ranging from a study of a nude girl to a busy factory scene. He uses unusual angles and lighting effects.

Mr. Treuthardt says he received a letter from Massonet in which the artist told of his custom to live for at least a month in a place for which he intended to paint a poster, so he would get the "feel" of the place and the people.

He certainly gets tremendous feeling into his posters.

Carigiet is one of the leading poster artists in Switzerland, where this form of art is so important to the country's tremendous tourist trade. Carigiet works with a greasy color pencil and produces amazing results with tiny, short lines.

Mr. Treuthardt says people often beg him to sell some of his Carigiets, but he always refuses because they are so precious.

"Posters are hard to get these days, not like the pre-war times, when countries liked to send their posters to anyone who asked for them," he said.

"I have my contacts and they send them to me."

Mr. Treuthardt, also a Swiss, was formerly a master at Scots College, Sydney, where he taught French. To improve his pupils' French, he used to show them overseas posters.

Then he got the idea of collecting and exhibiting posters. "Now I lecture on poster art, geography, and social studies and exhibit my posters at schools and to adults with the help of the Education Department and the Arts Council of Australia," he said.

Our radio session:

HERE'S YOUR SONG

LISTENING TIMES

SYDNEY, 2GB, 7.15 p.m., Thursday.
MELBOURNE, 3AW, 7.15 p.m., Thursday.
MARYBOROUGH, 3CV, 7.15 p.m., Thursday.
BRISBANE, 4BH, 6.30 p.m., Thursday.
ADELAIDE, 5DN, 6.45 p.m., Thursday.
PERTH, 6IX, 6.45 p.m., Monday.
KATANNING, 6WB, 6.45 p.m., Monday.
MERREDIN, 6MD, 6.45 p.m., Monday.
BRIDGETOWN, 6BY, 6.45 p.m., Monday.
HOBART, 7HO, 7.15 p.m., Saturday.
LAUNCESTON, 7LA, 7.15 p.m., Saturday.

The clue of the yellow flower

TWO "camellia detectives," Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Peer, of Los Angeles, U.S.A., flew out of Sydney recently on their way to Indo-China, where they hope to track down the only known yellow camellia in the world—which they think is growing in the battle area there.

"It was last reported 40 years ago," Mrs. Peer told us, interrupting her packing for a while. "You see, all camellias today are red or white, with variations upon these two colors. Think of the wonderful tones you could make by hybridising a yellow camellia."

From Indo-China the couple will go to Japan, where a perfumed camellia is reported to exist in the southern island.

Mr. Peer, who heads a world-wide music publishing company, first became interested in camellias nine years ago and now has more than 5000 growing in his garden.

Last year Mr. and Mrs. Peer, with their nine-year-old son, Ralph Iversen Peer II, toured Europe, searching for a cemellia known as "Flora Pleno," which they unearthed in Oporto, Portugal.

A *MELBOURNE girl we know paid an astrologer 30/- for casting a horoscope. The predictions were heavy with gloom. But our friend wasn't depressed. "I'm not taking it too seriously," she said. "I didn't give the astrologer my right age."*

Back to the Mau Mau

FORTY-EIGHT hours' flying time after leaving Melbourne, Mrs. C. A. Ryan, well-known Australian woman sheep breeder in Kenya, was back in Mau Mau terrorist country with a revolver at her side, ready for split-second use.

Her 3000-acre property, "Garryowen," is just 50 miles from the Aberdare Mountains, the central hideout of the Mau Maus in Kenya.

"When an attack comes we have just two seconds to get in first," she said.

"Farmers, their wives, and families have the double job of running their properties and also policing the colony as members of the Police Reserve Flying Squad.

"Women, as well as men, are conscripted into this squad to patrol farms, hunt terrorists, and support British regiments fighting the fanatical phantom army.

"Homes are barred like fortresses, and dining-tables are set with revolvers neatly laid beside the cutlery."

* * *

LATEST New York fashion for men is a bow tie made of mink.

We asked the buyer of a well-known Sydney store whether Australian men were likely to follow the lead of their American cousins. In a horrified voice he said he couldn't imagine it.

He's not the only one whose imagination shies away from the idea. As a friend of ours remarked, "Fancy having to buy a mink tie for Bill's birthday instead of the usual navy-blue and white silk!"

Book News

HANGING on the walls of the small house, now a museum, off the Piazza di Spagna in Rome where John Keats died is a sketch of the poet drawn by his friend Joseph Severn, artist, and **"The Remarkable Young Man"** of Cecil Roberts' new novel.

When Keats was ill, Severn looked after him. Left alone after Keats' death, Severn became a fashionable painter in the cosmopolitan society of post-Napoleonic days in Rome.

Mr. Roberts has put great research into his work, so much so that details of Roman life in the 1820's have obscured the real personality of Joseph Severn—the generous, handsome, and thinking man.

While it is interesting to read of the masked balls for 800 guests held beneath silk pavilions, the reader is apt to feel like a wallflower at a party.

But Mr. Roberts makes most of his scenes live, including the rather dreadful one when the angry Lady Westmorland arrived at the artist's wedding "dressed from head to foot in black silk," thus revealing her feelings about the marriage.

Published by Hodder and Stoughton. Our copy from the publishers.—H.F.

* * *

IN **"Madeleine's Journal"** the author, Mrs. Robert Henrey, informs us cosily that although she is a writer she is ultra-feminine, wears her hair long, has a curving figure, and "the irregular sort of face that only Renoir could have painted."

She dotes on sewing, cooking, her son Bobby, and dreams of "success in terms of an Eve Curie, a Jeanne Lanvin, or a Marie Laurencin."

In page after page, spattered with her favorite punctuation (!!!), Mrs. Henrey describes fan mail from overseas, her dreams, what her cook talks about, how she talks to friends, and what she buys in the shops.

This chit-chat, which served well in "The Little Madeleine," the story of her youth in Montmartre, was once very interesting. Now, however, one feels that she is just an incorrigible talker, with very little left to say.

In spite of this, she is certain to find readers who like Mrs. Henrey for what she is.

In one chapter she likens herself to a pretty ladybird which was "so inquisitive, so light on her feet that I knew she was a woman."

There's an old rhyme about this, beginning, I think, with the apt phrase, "Ladybird, ladybird, fly away home."

"Madeleine's Journal," by Mrs. Robert Henrey, is published by J. M. Dent and Sons, Ltd. Our copy from Angus and Robertson.—H.F.

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PARIS BY NIGHT

● For spring evenings the trend is to prettiness. Dresses are cut with bustles, trimmed with a tracery of embroidery, and often worn with a trailing stole or tiny matched shoulder-covering bolero jacket.

PIERRE BALMAIN'S lavish, flower-embroidered evening dress (above) is made in heavy ribbed cotton. A diaphanous chiffon stole worn twisted across the throat and round the arms trails to the floor at the back.

JACQUES FATH'S aquamarine satin ball gown (right), worn with matching wrist-length gloves. The dress is designed with an Edwardian bustle at the back. A tiny bolero is worn to cover the shoulders.

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SYDNEY HOUSEWIFE SAYS:

"I didn't think any peas could taste so tender . . . so sweet as BIRDS EYE QUICK-FROZEN PEAS"

AS FRESH AS IF YOU HAD JUST RUSHED THEM FROM GARDEN TO TABLE . . . BECAUSE OF BIRDS EYE MIRACLE QUICK-FREEZING

Mrs. C. Headley, of Neutral Bay, is a modern home-maker. She says: "No more shop-tired peas for us. Birds Eye Peas always taste as though they'd just come off the vine".

SEE WHAT YOU SAVE

When you buy ordinary "shop-tired" peas, you pay for pods and some poor quality peas that have to be thrown away. With Birds Eye quick-frozen peas you eat *all* you buy—and every pea so fresh you can practically taste the dew on it. And remember, you don't need a 'frig. to enjoy Birds Eye foods all the year round.

Peas, Beans, Asparagus, Sweet Corn, Cauliflower, Mixed Vegetables, Fruits and Fish

Fresh berries all year round

BIRDS EYE RASPBERRIES or LOGANBERRIES

Your first taste tells you that Birds Eye berries are not ordinary berries. Here are berries at their best . . . bright, juicy beauties. Birds Eye picks them when they're sun-ripened to perfection, quick-freezes them *immediately* to seal in the true berry flavour. Birds Eye berries come firm and whole, ready to serve. No work, no washing, no waste!

SERVE BERRIES MANY DELICIOUS WAYS

These Birds Eye berries are delicious; just as they are, or served with cream or ice cream. You'll enjoy them, too, as a filling for tarts or pies, in jellied desserts, or combined with other fruits and served in fruit cup.

BIRDS EYE

ALWAYS AVAILABLE AT STORES WITH THIS SIGN

BE 32 W.W.F.P.C.

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The handsome buffet is 4' long and features sliding clear glass doors with ground-out finger grips; glass shelf; interior lacquered cream; satin-finish metal pulls.

The 'Manhattan'

a contemporary dining setting with sophisticated lines

This typically modern suite is perfectly suited for the smaller dining area. Matching the simple lines of buffet and chairs is the table, measuring 4' 9" x 2' 9", and designed to seat six quite comfortably—or more, as the occasion demands. There is ample room in the buffet for table linen, cutlery, china and glassware.

All pieces beautifully finished in honey blonde or natural maple colour.

The smart chairs are upholstered in famous long-wearing, non-staining "Vynex" in various attractive colours.

Murray fine furniture is sold by retail stores **only.** If your store does not have in stock the "Manhattan"—or any other Murray piece you are interested in—write to Murray Bros. Limited, Park Rd., Alexandria, Sydney (tel. MX 1473). They will tell you where you can purchase the item you want.

AT ALL GOOD FURNITURE STORES

Murray fine FURNITURE

Glamor goats

● Seventeen women goat-breeders will vie with men for honors in the goat section at the Royal Easter Show. Mrs. Margery Gow, of Turramurra, N.S.W., who owns the Jannali Saanen Stud, has already won several championships with her glamor goats, and will compete again this year. Her son Barry (at left) is photographed with Twinkle and Winkle, kids only 3½ weeks old.

Both Barry and Mrs. Gow's eldest son, Allan, will take part this year in a new competition for goat paraders.

UNINVITED GUESTS. Always hungry, the Gows' pet dog and cat try to pilfer an extra meal.

COLD SHOULDER. Twinkle and Winkle snub the other pets, and start their dinner.

MRS. MARGERY GOW with Julie (left), three-year-old junior and senior reserve champion of 1952; Joy (centre), four months old, and Tinkette, 18 months old, who gave a record pint-yield of nine pints of milk when she had her first kid at 12 months old.

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Peek Frean's

bring you another wonderful biscuit . . .

"MELTON FINGER"

Makers of the world famous Vita-Weat *Crispbread*

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Aerial acrobat in training for Show

By HELEN FRIZELL, staff reporter

An acrobat of the air—a white Performing Tumbler pigeon, the only one of his kind entered in the pigeon section of the Royal Easter Show—will, if all goes well, stand "like a soldier" for the judges.

PERFORMING Tumblers are amazing birds. They're called "Tumblers" because they fly very high in formation, which is usually in a close bunched triangle or circle. At a signal from the leader, they tumble downwards, somersaulting as many as twenty times. That is why they're known as the "acrobats of the air."

Pigeon-fancier 70-year-old Mr. David Low, of Naremburn, N.S.W., will take his Tumbler exhibit from the loft it shares with 72 other pigeons a week before the show.

He will pen the entrant separately, providing plenty of sawdust and water, giving the bird opportunities for bathing and for making his white feathers more glistening than before.

The Performing Tumbler will then be trained with a "judging stick," which is used to make show birds stand vertical and steady.

Performing Tumblers are not Mr. Low's only love among pigeons. In his 24ft. by 6ft. loft there are 72 pigeons—Blondinettes, Satinettes, Bluettes, Silverettes, Silver Turbits, English Owls, Short-faced Tumblers, Almond Tumblers, Tipplers, and Helmets.

"All the birds have personalities of their own," said Mr. Low, telling us that a pigeon-fancier should always move slowly and speak softly when among his birds.

Fluttering about my head and planing down to land at Mr. Low's feet were some of the most beautiful birds I have ever seen.

"They are Oriental Frills," said Mr. Low. "Sometimes they are called 'Gems of the Orient,' 'Flowers of the Pigeon World,' or 'Feathered Flowers.'

"Look at this Bluette—at the crested peak at the back of his head, the white body, the pale sky-blue frilled feathers on his chest. Notice the wing-markings and the feathers which look like carnation petals, serrated at the ends and shaded in color. See the grouse-feathered legs and feet and the bull's eye with no iris showing."

Mr. Low keeps Tumbler pigeons, not for flying, but as feeders for the Oriental Frill pigeons (which include the Blondinettes, Satinettes, Bluettes, and Silverettes).

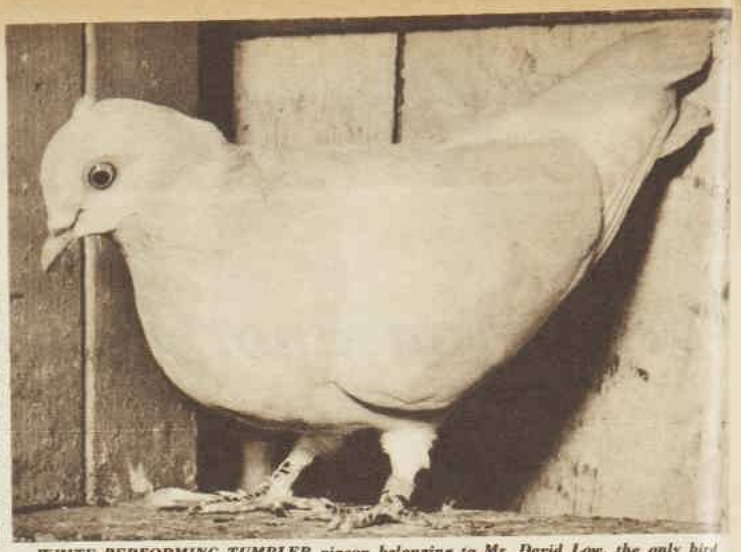
"When I say feeders," stated Mr. Low, "I should explain that Oriental Frills cannot feed their own offspring. The Tumblers do that for them. Oriental Frills have very small beaks, less than a quarter of an inch long.

"So you must put Oriental Frill eggs under the Tumblers, which will act as foster parents. Oriental Frills, which cannot feed their own children, can return the compliment and feed the Tumblers, which have long beaks."

Mr. Low is a life member of the Pigeon Fanciers' Society of N.S.W., life member of the Fantail Club of N.S.W., honorary member of the Fantail Club of Victoria, Australian Director of the International Short-faced Tumbler Club, and member of the English Short-faced Tumbler Club of America.

His pigeons, which are ringed on one leg, are given water and food twice a day. The food is mainly wheat, with some "corn, maize, milo, canary seed as a titbit."

DAVID LOW, of Naremburn, N.S.W., with some of his short-beaked "Oriental Frill" or "Feathered Flowers."



WHITE PERFORMING TUMBLER pigeon belonging to Mr. David Low, the only bird of its breed entered in the Royal Easter Show. Tumblers fly high in formation, peel off at a signal from their leader, and tumble down, somersaulting.

The Answer to Your's and Baby's Problems!

THE NEW STORK FOLDAMODE

A TUBULAR STEEL, FOLDING COMMODE COMPLETE WITH PLASTIC TRAINER AND REMOVABLE FEEDING TRAY

Mothers will find the Stork "Foldamode" indispensable when visiting, travelling, holidaying or at home. It's so light, easy to manage, and attractively finished in long-lasting blue, pink or cream enamel.

STORK THE BEST IN BABY CARRIAGES

"For baby's healthier tomorrow buy it new . . . don't borrow"

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DO YOU KNOW YOUR CATTLE?

Of the 14 breeds of cattle being exhibited at this year's Easter Show, the eight shown here are among the most popular. If you can identify them correctly—all of them—you can boast that you really know cattle. Clues, with answers at the end, are given in the captions under the pictures.

TO city people cattle mean either milk to drink or meat to eat. To country people, particularly cattlemen, they have a beauty surpassing that of bathing belles or movie queens.

A country man looks for a beast's coat condition and carriage, color and markings, and amount of flesh on ribs and flanks.

Although its eyes may be big, brown, and limpid, the farmer examines the size of the head, especially if it is a cow, when the head should be feminine and nicely shaped, and the hindquarters broad for both calf-bearing and milk capacity.

BIG, QUIET FELLOW, is most adaptable to climatic conditions, matures early, and belongs to the most popular beef breed in Australia. He is a Beef Shorthorn.

USUALLY DEEP RED, bald-faced, with a white crest and withers, he travels well, and withstands sticky heat and cold. His breed is challenging the Shorthorn. A Hereford.

HARDINESS and adaptability are making this blended-blood breed increasingly popular. Splendid milk-producers, they have been improved here. Australian Illawarra Shorthorn.

IF YOU CAN'T pick this dairy-breed bull your cattle knowledge is nil. He is found on the N.S.W. north coast, and the cows of his family give rich milk. A Guernsey.

BIGGEST-FRAMED dairy cattle in Australia, these are always black and white, often mostly black. High milk-producers, they like lush pastures. A Friesian.

POLLED AND BLACK, this breed produces splendid beef carcases and is admirably suited for export baby beef. They are originally from Scotland. Aberdeen Angus.

A TRIM for a beast of a dairy breed popular in Australian coastal areas. Usually white with brown or red patches, or red or brown with white, they are big animals, and the cows give much milk rich in butter fat. Ayrshire.

THREE GENERATIONS of dairy-breed champions held for display. At left is Banyule Mermaid, of Sir Frederick Stewart's stud at Narrabeen, N.S.W., who will be eight during Show Week; daughter Banyule Mermaid II; granddaughter Glen Ryan Mermaid. Jersey.

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HERE'S a wonderful assortment of luscious fruits that have been triple washed by a special new process, then dried and blended in our very own kitchens. That's why Big Sister Fruit Mix is so perfectly clean and free from grit and stalks. A sealed inner wrap of cellophane keeps your fruit mix fresh and tender.

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PARIS BY DAY

● **Spring days on the Paris boulevards have produced numbers of successful young suits, slim-line dresses made in bold flower prints—and again the elegant coat-dress ensemble.**

CHRISTIAN DIOR'S "little boy" suit (right) has a short, belted jacket and straight, slender skirt. The sailor-type collar is news.

CHRISTIAN DIOR called the ensemble (above) "Sydney." The dress is made in white organza and covered with an immense coat in a wonderful clear beige color. Beige and white is spring news. Models in Dior's collection were called after world capitals.

GIVENCHY'S butter-yellow suit (above right) is worn with a cleverly draped matching turban finished with an ornamental buckle.

JACQUES FATH'S slim-line flowered dress (right) is designed with fullness over the bosom—a wide, open neckline and short draped sleeves.

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Direct all enquiries to: G. Herring (Aust.) Pty. Ltd., Dunning Avenue, Rosebery.

DRESS SENSE

by Betty Keep

• Slimness achieved by stitched - down pleats is a flattering line for the average matron's figure.

THIS fashion fact answers an inquiry I received from a reader in her early fifties. It also answers numerous other requests for a dress suitable for the older woman.

Here is the reader's letter:

"WILL you please design a style suitable for a woman in her early fifties? The frock is for autumn and I want it made in wool-dechine and to have short sleeves. I have an average figure for my age, a 40in. bust measurement."

The dress I have chosen in answer to your letter (see illustration at right) is an ideal design for the mid-forty and mid-fifty age group. The simple bodice top is flattering and easy to wear and the narrow stitched-down pleats create easy skirt width without bulk.

A paper pattern for the design is available in sizes 36in., 38in., 40in., and 42in. The caption under sketch will tell you how to order.

Here are some other letters from my mailbag, and my replies:

* * *

"AS I am planning clothes for my wedding, which will take place the last week in August, I would like your ideas on my going-away costume. I did think, perhaps, a coat and frock, as they would be useful for the spring."

I don't think for the turn of the season you could have anything smarter or more appropriate than a coat-dress ensemble. Furthermore, it is going to be a very important spring fashion. For the color, I suggest both coat and dress in chestnut-brown, with a nasturtium-colored lining in the coat. The coat could be a cardigan type without buttoned fastening, but just tied at the collarless neckline with ascot scarf ends. For the dress I like the idea of a slim sheath, the bodice sleeveless and finished with an oval neckline.

The ensemble could be made either in a featherweight wool or a heavy silk such as faille or shantung. Have the coat lining in organdie.

* * *

"WOULD you be so kind as to help me with an idea for a cocktail frock? I want it made in a pastel crepe. I would like to know your choice of a shade; it is to go under a black coat. I want the style sleeveless or just to have a small sleeve."

A good color choice for the cocktail hour would be pale beige. Beige has never been more popular, and, furthermore, it looks well combined with black. Have the dress made on princess lines with a box-pleated skirt and a high bateau neckline, the sleeves tiny and crescent-shaped.

D.S.80.— Matron's one - piece dress obtainable in sizes 36in. to 42in. bust. Requires 4½ yds. 54in. material. Price, 3/6. Patterns may be obtained from Mrs. Betty Keep, Dress Sense, Box 4088, G.P.O., Sydney.

"I ALWAYS enjoy your weekly fashion notes, and now I would like some advice. I am 16 and take a 34in. bust fitting. I want an idea for a shortie jacket. The problem is: I want the jacket to wear over frocks that have full and narrow skirts."

A double - breasted "topper" just waist-length, fitted and finished with wrist-length, cuffed sleeves and a rounded shawl collar, would be smart with a slender or wide skirt.

* * *

"I DON'T know if you ever give advice on children's fashions, but if you do I would like help on the following problem: My girl, aged seven, is to be her sister's only attendant at an afternoon wedding. I wondered if you could help us with her frock. I want something to make her look a bit fatter because she is very thin. Would it be suitable for her to wear a short frock so it could be a party frock later?"

It would be quite correct for your daughter to wear a short-skirted bridesmaid dress, especially as there is to be only one bridal attendant at the wedding. My suggestion for the dress is white organdie made over a pale rose-pink taffeta slip, and worn with a matching pink taffeta sash. For the design, I like the idea of a tripletiered skirt and a bodice top finished with little puff sleeves and a tiny Peter Pan collar.

A wreath of pink baby roses and a matching bouquet could complete the ensemble. After the wedding the dress could be worn over a plain white slip for less formal occasions.

* * *

"PLEASE suggest at your earliest convenience a material and style for a skirt for my teenage daughter."

A wool flannel skirt cut in four full flared gores with side pockets in the seam would be a young and attractive design for a teenager's skirt. I think it would be quite a good idea to have the skirt matched to a sleeveless waistcoat jacket —to make a chic autumn-into-winter sports ensemble.

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and style

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Don't let ugly, disfiguring Pimples, Eczema, Acne, Ringworm, Psoriasis, Blackheads or Itching, Cracking, Peeling, Burning Skin Troubles make life miserable and spoil your fun. Don't be embarrassed and feel inferior because of bad skin. Now every chemist has a new American Hospital Discovery called Nixoderm that stops the itch in 7 minutes, kills germs and fungus, and in 24 hours begins to heal the skin, clear, soft, and smooth. No matter how long you have suffered, get Nixoderm from your chemist to-day under positive guarantee to heal your skin or money back.

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Young Casuals

● These flexible young fashions are designed to follow any autumn schedule. They are perfect for town all the week, and for week-ends within your own four walls.

● *Streamlined suit (right) has a shapely jacket contrasting in color and fabric with the skirt.*

● *These two blouses (above) are styled for a double purpose—to wear under a suit or with slacks or a separate skirt relaxing at home. Note cummerbund belt creates an ensemble look.*

● *Youthful suit has a waist-fitted jacket, unusual tab fastenings, and three-quarter sleeves. It also has a white collar and very slender skirt.*

● *This blouse and separate skirt are smart enough to be worn all day and might even include a casual dinner date. Contrasting bands make an unusual trim for the collar, front, and cuffs.*

DON'T BE A PRISONER OF THE BAR-SOAP HABIT!

Rinso sets you FREE from dishwashing drudgery

...GETS DISHES CLEANER TWICE AS FAST

says Mrs. Sydenham, of Station St., Arncliffe, N.S.W.

In home after home all through Australia, more housewives wash up with Rinso than with any other soap product, because Rinso is fastest for dishes . . . kind to hands. Sprinkle a little Rinso into the sink after tea tonight — see how those thicker, richer suds dissolve grease from plates and pots and pans! And those Rinso suds stay lively right to the end of the biggest stack of washing-up . . . a thing you never get from slow, skimpy bar-soap suds. Cutlery, plates and glasses gleam. Modern housewives agree Rinso's as good for dishes as for clothes.

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MATTER OF MINUTES

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The safe, sure way to keep your skin petal-smooth is to use DELILAH, the new odourless hair-removing cream that is equally good for face, legs, arms and underarms. Simply smooth on DELILAH and unwanted hair vanishes without a shadow in a matter of minutes.

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Polio precautions in action

THE QUEEN'S reception at Kalgoorlie, Western Australia, was the first at which the precautions against polio, instituted as a safeguard to the Queen, were used. Raewyn Coppin (above), an 11-year-old Legacy ward, was the first child on the tour who was unable to present her bouquet to the Queen personally. Raewyn curtsied, and placed the bouquet on a side table.

"Family picnic" atmosphere prevails in Perth

A refrigerated ice-cream van in the Royal progress through Perth set the family picnic atmosphere that persisted throughout the Queen's Western Australian tour.

By ANNE MATHESON, our Royal tour correspondent

THE van carried a picnic lunch and dinner for the Queen and the Royal household specially prepared on board Gothic.

The Queen's "quarantine diet" was a cold collation for both lunch and dinner. Even table-linen and cutlery was brought from Gothic.

The meals were prepared by her page, sergeant footman and footman who kept the requisite six feet away from all members of the Government House staff while they set the table and served the meal.

The Queen, the Duke and the Royal household lunched and dined in a private dining-room while the Governor of Western Australia, Sir Charles Gairdner, and the Honorable Lady Gairdner and their staff lunched and dined alone.

The Queen and her household had fairy toast, since no fresh bread was eaten on their polio precaution diet. Although the salads were brought in Gothic to Western Australia, they were carefully washed and prepared in a very slight antiseptic solution that was quite tasteless.

Grapes were all peeled before being eaten and no fresh water was placed on the table.

Observing the polio precautions was obviously intriguing the Queen and the Duke when they stepped out of the Royal Constellation at Kalgoorlie Airport.

The Governor, Sir Charles Gairdner, and his wife, and the Premier, Mr. A. R. G. Hawke, and his wife took their places on the airfield just before the Queen's plane landed.

The ladies curtsied and the men bowed as the Queen appeared at the door of the plane to walk down the red-carpeted steps.

Reaching the prescribed distance of six feet, the Queen folded her hands firmly in front of her; the Duke clasped his behind him; the Governor bowed; his lady curtsied.

Then the Queen smiled, the Duke grinned, and in that moment the tone of the whole friendly atmosphere of the West was set—the Queen, unable to keep a straight face any longer, laughed delightedly, and everyone joined in.

The reception lines at Kalgoorlie lost nothing in dignity because of the "keep your distance" rule, and no handshakes.

Although half an hour late, the Royal couple did not hurry their reception, and the Duke spoke at length to the councillors.

On the way to Boulder the Queen had a special wave and smile for hospital patients on couches and wheel-chairs.

Just under an hour later, the Queen arrived at Perth Airport. Before she left the plane, she shook hands for the last time in Australia with Captain D. F. McMaster, commander of the Royal Constellation, whom she had made a Member of the Royal Victorian Order on the trip from Kalgoorlie to Perth.

The Queen left behind her at Boulder a bouquet presented by Beverley Joy Noble, an aboriginal girl of five years old, of the Kurrawang Native Mission.

Beverley was brought to the Mission six months ago to learn not only English but the taste of fruit and vegetables.

Until then her diet had been lizards, grubs, goannas, and possum. She had to be coaxed to eat spinach and oranges.

Although the Queen had to leave Beverley's bouquet behind her because of the polio precautions, her photograph presenting the flowers is to be sent to the Queen.

Her Majesty was so fascinated by Beverley that she asked her equerry if he could get her one of the Press photographs taken of the presentation.

The 17½-mile route from the airport to Gothic at Fremantle gave plenty of room for the hundred thousand people who lined the route for their first glimpse of the Queen.

Perth's welcome was orderly and friendly but not highly demonstrative.

Polio precautions were rigidly observed when the Queen planted a tree in King's Park. All those handling the seedling did so with cloths and the Queen wore gloves.

The Queen broke the "no-handling" rule when she laid a wreath on the State's War Memorial.

The Queen's handling of the wreath was discussed officially and it was decided that the risk was acceptable as the Queen wore gloves that could be discarded.

The Queen discarded the gloves before she appeared on a balcony at Government House for the open-air investiture which took the place of the planned indoor ceremony.

There were many inconsistencies in carrying out the polio precautions at this ceremony. The Queen touched all whom she invested with honors.

The suite that was prepared for the Queen and the Duke at Government House was used by them in the evening to change for the Parliamentary reception.

The reception had such a sparkle, and the Queen's lightheartedness was so infectious, there was an air of carnival.

Outside Parliament House crowds caught the festive spirit as they strained to catch a glimpse of the Queen in all the splendor of blazing jewels and a gown of orchid-pink that glittered with iridescent sequins.

It was a gala night in Perth and the crowds as the Royal car left Parliament to drive slowly along the brilliant avenue of light and color of famous St. George's Terrace cheered more loudly and spontaneously than any of the crowds during the day.

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ADMIRING an exhibit in the handicrafts section is Mrs. Holland (above), who is supervising handicrafts entries in the Show.

WHIPPING UP a light sponge is a hobby of taxi-driver Bill Elliott (right). He has entered for three cake classes in this year's Show.

Show time is always their work time

By a staff reporter

Sydney's Royal Easter Show is the outing of the year for thousands of children and their parents, but to the men and women behind the scenes it is hard work climaxing weeks, often months, of preparation.

WHEN the Show opens on April 9, 20 acres of lawns, thousands of flowers and hundreds of trees will be in perfect order to greet the huge crowds.

Head gardener Walter South, who gave up his job as an iron worker to take up horticulture, is proud of the well-kept gardens.

"Before the Show our staff of four gardeners swells to 11," he said.

To electrical engineer Eric Halliwelle the Show in full swing means that the ground needs more electric current than a town the size of Goulburn.

"When I first came here we had a little bit of a switchboard on Lang Road," he said, "and our current requirements were equal to those of only a small factory.

"Now we have 15 miles of main cables and more than 69,000 lighting points. When we're in full running order 45 mechanics are full time on maintenance."

Novice exhibitor William Elliott, 32-year-old taxi-driver, of King's Cross, Sydney, has been waiting for this Show since he was 24 and made his first sponge cake.

Eight years ago Mr. Elliott's sister, Loretta, returned home triumphant from domestic science school.

"She was only 14," said Mr. Elliott. "I thought that if she could make a cake I should be able to learn."

Mr. Elliott entered for the Brookvale Show last year, but didn't get a place.

"I should do better this time because I know now it's important to make the cakes look pretty on proper d'oyleys and stiff cardboard stands," he said.

"My father thinks the whole thing is a joke and a lot of my mates laugh at me for wanting to cook, but if I can just get a certificate for a third place I won't care what they say," he said.

One of the busiest women in Show time is Mrs. Ruby Holland, who is in charge of the handicrafts section.

"We have 3000 entries this year, which is a record, and nearly 1000 more than last year," Mrs. Holland said.

A young married couple, Harry and Jean Holland, have been training for weeks for their part in the Royal Show.

They are dare-devil motor-cyclists in "The Wall of Death," one of the spectacular sideshows.

The Hollands perform in a wooden drum 16 feet high and 30 feet in diameter, riding their cycle up the walls in a spiral until they speed almost horizontally near the top at 45 miles an hour.

The Hollands once had a narrow escape when Jean's long auburn hair tangled around Harry's face and temporarily blinded him.

"The cycle hit the safety cable at the top of the drum, then went to the bottom very fast, leaving one foot-rest behind," said Jean. "After that I had my hair cut short."

When they are not working at the Show, Jean is a typist in a city office and Harry a maintenance man at a big amusement park.

The Show is a family tradition for Sidney George Haron, 61-year-old overseer.

"It gets in your blood, I suppose," he said. "My father, Frank Haron, was overseer here for 46 years and I started work with him in my school holidays.

"In 1921 they built a house for my Dad in the grounds. I live there now."

Engineering Superintendent Charles Roy Tennant, who has been in his job since 1939, says that this is the first year that all sheep dog trials will be held at night.

"It will be interesting to see how the dogs work under lights," he said. "In previous years owners have felt that the dogs who were tried at the end of the day in failing light were handicapped."

A demonstration of honey production will be a new attraction this year in the dairy produce pavilion.

The women demonstrators, both wives of commercial bee-keepers, are Mrs. Margie Darrell, of Kellyville, and her friend Mrs. Edna Berman, of East Maitland.

"I'm quite nervous about my part of the demonstration," said Mrs. Darrell. "But I'm nervous of the audience, not of the bees."

IN ACTION, "Wall of Death" riders Mr. and Mrs. Harry Holland speed almost horizontally round the top of a big wooden drum. They do their act every year at the Show.

HEAD GARDENER (left) at the Show-Ground, Wally South, examines one of the blooms in the Royal Agricultural Society's trial dahlia ground, which is his special care.

SHOWGROUND OVERSEER Sidney Haron (above), with some of the keys in his charge. He took over the job from his father and has lived and worked at the ground nearly all his life.

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MOTHER

"Oh, THERE you are, Mum!"

REWARDING

"Buy the first pair and he gives your foot an affectionate little squeeze."

It seems to me

By

Dorothy Drain

COMING from a long line of confirmed table-napkin starchers, it never occurred to me to doubt the wisdom of the practice until I had breakfast the other day with a charming American couple at their hotel.

They were Mr. and Mrs. George F. Russell, in Australia on a business trip.

On their return, Mrs. Russell plans to write some newspaper articles about her travels, and Mr. Russell is keeping notes of all the odd trifles which strike a traveller as different from home.

Starched table napkins happen to be among them.

Mr. Russell, in partnership with a friend, Mr. Julius Mann, invented an electronic device for edge-gluing veneers which is being used in the plywood factory of Commonwealth-New Guinea Timbers Ltd., at Bulolo.

He has, as well, television and newspaper interests in Tacoma, Washington, U.S.A.

Tacoma is near Seattle, on Puget Sound, in the timber country of the north-west coast.

When Mr. Russell went there to live he was struck with the fact that, because big timber supplies were running out, it was necessary to find some way of using the smaller logs.

An interest in amateur radio as a hobby led him to electronics, and electronics proved to be the solution for gluing together the small pieces of veneer to make big pieces.

It occurred to me, as I retrieved my table napkin from the floor for the third time during breakfast, that it often takes an inventor's mind to see through simple, as well as difficult, problems.

This week when I did the washing I left the starch out of the table napkins. You never know what you will learn in newspaper work.

* * *

VARIOUS recipes are given for success in any field. I think I found one of them when listening to Florence Desmond, the famous English impersonator, at a Press party given for her when she passed through Sydney to Perth.

As is usual at such Press parties, Miss Desmond was the centre of a group of questioners for the duration, and for a while, before edging into the circle, I stood off and watched her.

She was wearing a grey faille cocktail dress and was looking a little tired. She resembled only herself, and I wondered what could be the secret of her remarkable gift of mimicry.

But a few minutes later, listening to her, I had an inkling of what made her outstanding in the field she chose. It might be summed up in the word "conviction."

When she talks about her impersonations you realise that while she is doing them she convinces herself that she IS the person she is enacting.

And, indeed, wen she told us how she does Queen Victoria, using no more facial make-up than pieces of apple in her cheeks, she convinced me, too.

For a few seconds the party faded and Miss Desmond WAS Queen Victoria.

A FEW years ago I was to go on an assignment to Birdsville, in the far west of Queensland, and the trip had to be cancelled at the last minute.

Ever since I've hoped that one of these days I'd see that part of the country. The other day I did, in the Shell Film Unit's documentary, "Back of Beyond."

"Documentary" is always an intimidating word. It conjures up a vision of half an hour devoted to the life of the boll-weevil. Yet some of the most absorbing films ever made come into the category.

"Back of Beyond," written and directed by Mr. John Heyer, of Sydney, is a most beautiful film.

It shows the lonely life of those who live along the Birdsville-Marree track, using the mailman, Tom Kruse, as the central figure. Tom Kruse makes the 300-mile trip through the desolate country every fortnight.

Tom shares a starring role with the desert itself. The supporting cast are the people of the outback, Tom's offsider, Henry, the station men and women, and aborigines.

I should think that Tom's mailbags will be heavier as a result of this film.

In time there ought to be quite a bit of fan mail making its way along the Birdsville-Marree track.

* * *

A COPENHAGEN publisher, Mr. Carit Anderson, climbs mountains as a hobby, and always hacks off a bit of the summit to bring home.

He sounds like the character in some book I read long ago, who rushed along to departing travellers with a bottle and asked them to bring back some water from Niagara Falls.

* * *

FILM actress Zsa Zsa Gabor told a Press conference that she had no plans to marry Porfirio Rubirosa, who has separated from Barbara Hutton. Mr. Rubirosa, she said, was just an old family friend.

Some men fall into one category and some into another,
Some are the kind who are inevitably treated as brother,
Some, who from early youth catch the five-thirty-one,
Are excellent husbands and handy if you want a little carpentry done.
And then there is the old family friend whose disposition is sunny,
Who gives away brides, makes a fourth at bridge, and lends money.
And there are others like Mr. Rubirosa and the attractive Aly,
Who, in their romantic adventures, score a pretty close tally,
Both of them handsome, and whether you like them or not—well, that depends,
But neither, by the furthest stretch of imagination, could truly be described as old family friends.

Double enchantment

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Bewitching fragrance!

Super-fine, silk-sifted, exquisitely fragrant Gemey Face Powder's velvet-soft texture gives a beautiful effect on every type of skin. It's light as air, yet covers completely without caking or streaking. Dry, rough patches freshen in a moment; lines, tiny blemishes smooth away. Gaily blended with the fragrance of Gemey perfume, this is the perfect powder to keep your skin looking its youngest and freshest. *At all chemists and selected department stores . . .* **5/6.**

For all-over loveliness — **Gemey talcum** *is a subtle link to Gemey Face Powder in an exciting harmony of fragrance . . . creates a feeling of good taste and discrimination, and keeps you lovely from top to toe . . .* **3/9.**

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CONGO FLOWERS

● The Belgian Congo generally conjures up visions of steaming jungles, but great beauty blooms in both the wet and dry seasons on the woodland plateaus of Katanga province, where these colorful pictures were taken.

ADENIUM, known as the "desert rose," grows in gardens and the woodlands of the Belgian Congo.

HIBISCUS RHODANTHUS blooms profusely, pushing its flowers through ash.

CONVOLVULUS or "morning glory" grows luxuriantly after the natives burn-off before the wet season. Photographs by Leo and Molly Lyons.

OSBECKIA, a brilliantly colored flower, blooms after the first rains of the wet season have fallen.

LASIOSIPHON, another plant which comes rapidly into bloom after the grass fires have burned out.

VERNONIA, a feathery flower that blooms at the beginning of the wet season. It comes into leaf later.

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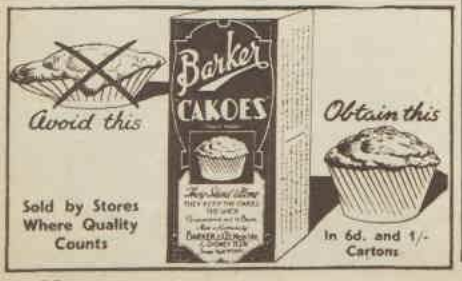

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COURT MAY MOVE TO WINDSOR

London to outcheer Aussies in Royal welcome home

When the Queen and her family return to London on May 15 they will receive a welcome of "Coronation" proportions. Londoners at the moment are prodding one another into demonstrativeness so that their reserve will not appear to be lack of enthusiasm after Australian crowds.

By PATRICIA ROLFE, of our London staff

THE Queen, after 173 days away from Britain, will sail up the Thames to Westminster Bridge with the bells of all London's churches and the glad "welcome home" shouts of her people ringing in her ears.

However, she does not come back to an easy or restful time, but to an extremely busy, although foreshortened, season. All the Monarch's traditional summer engagements — the Trooping of the Color, the Derby and Ascot—are on the programme.

The Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh may take a few days off, perhaps to go to Balmoral at the end of May, but until the August holidays they have a very full engagement book.

In the minds of many people the Queen returns to England to begin a new phase in her reign.

Since her accession, events have followed so quickly one after the other that there has been little time to contemplate changes, yet it is believed there are some things the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh would like done a little differently.

London newspapers have already made some sweeping predictions.

It has been suggested, and probably with good grounds, that the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh intend to simplify Court life in order to have more time with their family.

Other predictions concern the Royal residences. First prediction is that the Queen has decided that Buckingham Palace is just no place to make a home.

Buckingham Palace has been the Royal residence for 115 years.

No monarch since Victoria has liked it, but perhaps Elizabeth, as a woman, is the first one sensitive enough to atmosphere to decide that, when it comes to living, tradition is not enough.

It is said that the Queen and her Court will be transferred to Windsor Castle. Royal Lodge, Windsor, would be reserved for the Queen Mother and Princess Margaret.

Windsor would give Prince Charles and Princess Anne the benefit of a healthy country life and allow their parents much more freedom of movement.

Another probable change seems to underline the important place of the Consort in the young Queen's life.

It is believed that next year the holding of levees will be resumed. Levees are the functions for men which correspond to presentation parties for women. None has been held since the reign of George V.

However, it has been suggested they will be resumed in 1955, with the Consort, and not the Sovereign, attending.

It seems definite that the Queen does not wish to return to the old pre-war style of Court with its lavish dressing. She feels that the present afternoon presentation parties are in keeping with the times.

The Queen Mother will receive debutantes at the first presentation parties on March 24 and 25.

Busy season ahead

THE Queen's first public engagement after her return will be on May 19, when she will drive through streets decorated with flags to a "welcome home" lunch given by the Lord Mayor of London.

The lunch will be held in the gilded Egyptian Hall at the Mansion House (the Lord Mayor's residence) instead of the traditional Guildhall, because the Guildhall is being repaired.

The Prime Minister, Sir Winston Churchill, and members of the Government will be among the guests, but the Egyptian Hall holds only 320 instead of the Guildhall's 800, so the guest list will be restricted.

On June 2 the Queen will attend the Derby, and the following day she plans to go to the Oaks.

On June 9 Her Majesty will go to the Royal Tournament at Earl's Court. The following day will be the Trooping of the Color—Queen Elizabeth's official birthday. Incidentally this year it will be the Duke of Edinburgh's actual birthday.

The Queen will review 2000 R.N.V.R. officers and men on Saturday, June 12. This is part of the celebrations of the 50th anniversary of the foundation of the "Wavy Navy." After that the Court will be at Windsor for several days for Ascot.

Another important engagement for the Queen will be to review the police force in Hyde Park on July 14. This will be the first Royal review of the police for 19 years—the last was in George V's reign.

On July 15 and 22 there will be the only two garden parties of the season at Buckingham Palace. Five thousand people will be invited to each.

On July 28 the Duke of Edinburgh flies to Canada for the Empire Games. A few days later the Queen and her children will go to Balmoral.

However, on August 17 the Queen will break with custom to fulfil a public engagement during the holiday. She will fly to Belfast to launch a new liner for the Shaw Savill Line—owners of the Gothic.

Model Quest

Judging by the mail in response to our quest for a model who will be 21 this June, a great many pretty girls are about to celebrate their coming-of-age.

WE want to find a typical Australian girl for a special modelling job. She must have her 21st birthday in June, 1954, and must be Australian-born.

The girl we choose will earn a modelling fee of 100 guineas. Six other girls, also selected to be photographed in color, will be paid ten guineas each.

TO ENTER: Send us an ordinary black-and-white photograph of yourself. It can be either head and shoulders or a full-length snapshot. With it enclose your full name and address and write a short letter telling us your measurements, your coloring, whether you are single or married, and something about your job and your other interests.

Address your photograph and letter to The Australian Women's Weekly, Box 4098WW, G.P.O., Sydney, mark it "Model Quest," and post it to reach us before April 21.

We will take our own pictures of finalists before making our decision. The girls chosen will be required to produce proof of their date of birth.

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If you or yours suffer rheumatism, aching muscles and joints, neuritis, kidney and bladder weakness, constant headaches or hot flushes, start the MENTHOIDS treatment right away. MENTHOIDS, with helpful diet chart, are 7/6 or 4/- everywhere.

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Hills Folding Laundry Pram saves carrying, lifting and stooping.

Hills Folding Chairs. Fold to 2" x 24" square for camping, garden or verandah.

Hills Twin-seat Swing — portable and safe.

Our back yard is a garden now — a place for fun and leisure!

We had a backyard to our home
with clothes lines, props and weeds,
A little patch of dug-up ground,
where father planted seeds,
Until one day the clothes line broke,
and falling prop hit Mum,
A "Supa" Hills Hoist 's what we need;
ask how soon can it come.

Our backyard 's our best garden now!
the nicest in our street,
Dad's made the grass a lovely lawn—
the beds are trim and neat,
It's fun, Mum says, *to do the wash*
and hang the clothes to dry,
It happened when our Hills Hoist came
and Mum bade work good-bye.

Hills Laundry Pram, Mum tells her friends,
saves carrying and bending,
It's also baby's basinette—
its use is never ending.
*Mum made the Hoist a gay striped top
to shade her from the sun,
Now there's a place to rest and read
when housework is all done.

'Twas then we bought Hills folding chairs
in colours gay and bright,
To make the place beneath Hills Hoist
our greatest home delight,
And last of all we bought a swing
for Tess and Trevor's pleasure,
Our backyard is a garden now—
a place for fun and leisure.

Every store that shows this window sticker can supply a Hills Hoist on easy terms for a few shillings weekly. Hills Hoists are available from every departmental and hardware store throughout Australia. They are made in three models, with six sizes in each model. The "Supa" hoist (illustrated) is the only hoist in Australia with tubular stays to specially carry a canvas canopy. A Hills folding Laundry Pram should also be bought. It is another labour saver of many uses. All Hills products are built to last a lifetime and guaranteed the best value in Australia.

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Installation is done in all Capital Cities by Hills experts for a small charge. Full installation instructions enclosed for Country buyers.

**Write to any of Hills offices for a free design and "make-up" instructions for Canopy top to suit only Hills "Supa" Hoist, with tubular stays. Mention size of your Hoist.*

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Post this coupon to-day to the nearest Hills Hoist office if your local retailer cannot supply full information.

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for canines

Sitting on dog in a big way

From LARRY FOLEY, in New York

For American ladies whose doggies complain they simply haven't a thing to wear, two enterprising young New Yorkers have provided a solution.

THE two men, Gregg Juarez and John Fortune Ryan, have hit on the idea of a business called "Canine Couturier."

Their clientele is very exclusive. The fashion-plate lady and gentleman dogs who shop—if so plebeian a word may be applied to such exalted creatures—at Canine Couturier are undoubtedly the best-dressed dogs in the world.

Everything available there is absolutely the dernier cri. Consider, pray, their team of designers: Jacques Fath, Oleg Cassini, and Hubert de Givenchy, who design the dogs' day, cocktail-hour, evening, and slumber wear; Mr. John, who styles their hats; and Mme Jolie Gabor, who designs their jewellery.

Mr. Ryan, a slim, boyish, handsome 24, runs the business in premises rented from Mr. Juarez, a slim, boyish, handsome 30, who runs an enterprise called "The House of Juarez."

Mr. Juarez's business is "decor-analysing" people.

While the dog is being fitted out on the ground floor of the House of Juarez, its owner may go upstairs to be decor-analysed—that is, advised by Mr. Juarez or one of his two male or two female decor-analysts on how to decorate and furnish her home to suit her personality.

The House of Juarez is a creaking old brownstone house way down east on 55th Street, New York, strategically placed between the Cafe Society belt and the snooty residential area of Sutton Place.

Canine Couturier is established in the ground-floor front room looking out on to a small courtyard adorned with statuary and dominated by the challenging sign: "Have You Been Decor-Analysed Yet?"

Feeling slightly guilty, and hoping I would not be asked this question point-blank, I entered Canine Couturier.

It was a small room with pink walls, crowded with antique furniture and objets d'art.

Mr. Ryan was busy with a customer, a grey-white miniature poodle with white bootees, who was trying on a gold lead.

The poodle was introduced by its owner, Miss Betty Maltz, a blue-eyed blonde in black.

"This is Mozel," she said. "Mozel wants a nice gold lead to match his gold-charm necklace. Don't you, Mozel? Say hello to the gentleman, Mozel. Mozel's eight."

Mozel's necklace was—let's see, "sweet" is the word, I believe.

"It's a life-history necklace," explained Miss Maltz. "See, there's a miniature aeroplane—that's because he flies a good deal. Oh, yes, he's been everywhere—Miami, the islands, oh, just about every place.

"And here's a tiny perfume bottle—because he always wears perfume. And a little house, to show he's got a good home. And a heart, with his telephone number. And a St. Christopher.

"See, there's a charm to show every side of his life."

"Doesn't he have a St. Roch medal?" asked Mr. Ryan. "St. Roch, you know, the patron saint of dogs?"

"Why, no, I don't believe he has," admitted Miss Maltz.

Mr. Ryan got out a St. Roch medal for Mozel.

Mozel then led Miss Maltz away, proud of his new lead and jangling his charms prettily.

Mr. Ryan coughed. "We have a complete line in dogs' wear and accessories," he began. "First, of course, come the collars. Leather collars are from eight dollars. But plain leather collars are really outmoded, after all.

"We specialise in jewelled collars—this, for example, in yellow velvet.

"It has a genuine leather backing and the diamonds are riveted through the vlevet to the leather.

SHOPPING with their owners at Canine Couturier, New York, these dogs can select high fashion wear for their wardrobes. "We intend to make it absolutely indecent for a dog to appear in public not properly dressed," says the shop's joint proprietor, Gregg Juarez.

"That's essential—stops a dog from scratching the diamonds off. It would quite ruin the look of the collar if any of the stones were missing.

"Jewelled collars are priced from 23 dollars 50 cents up. They are to be worn at such places as the Stork Club.

"Now for cocktails. Supposing you were holding a cocktail party, you would have your dog in one of these—a cocktail collar."

The cocktail collar Mr. Ryan held up was in emerald-green velvet, with a double row of pearls. "Twenty-four dollars fifty cents and up, said Mr. Ryan.

"Dogs' coats come in a variety of styles and materials. Our coats are all custom-made by our own tailor.

"Rain-coats—" he held up a blue-grey job — "this is a simple garment, but very necessary to any well-dressed dog's wardrobe. Twenty-five dollars and up."

Mr. Ryan took up a small bottle containing a dark liquid.

"I'm sure your dog would love our special perfume. It's called Kennel No. 9.

"The odor is scientifically approved for dogs. The perfume contains the natural dog oil. It attracts dogs to dogs. It smells like new-mown hay. Here, smell."

I did so. It smelled like something . . .

"Most important for dogs are their hats," said Mr. Ryan. "Canine Couturier's hats are made exclusively by Mr. John—he makes hats for the Duchess of Windsor, you know."

Mr. Ryan held up a tiny black bowler, a nifty little pink boater, and a fetching blue feathered number.

"Hats should match their mistresses' hats," said Mr. Ryan. "The prices are 35 dollars and up. For the dogs, that is. Depends on the hat the lady decided on for herself.

"Our dogs' scarves are designed exclusively by Oleg Cassini.

"Probably our most original creation for dogs is being designed by Jacques Fath. He is doing tights, priced 42 dollars 50 cents and up. No one else in New York has Paris-styled fashions in dogwear."

NOW! A SHAMPOO THAT LIFTS THAT SOAP VEIL and

Freshens YOUR HAIR

Super-soft "Vaseline" Liquid Shampoo leaves your hair livelier . . . lovelier — after one shampoo.

Unlike ordinary shampoos, "Vaseline" Liquid Shampoo contains no soap to veil the beauty that lies in your hair. Its active — but oh so gentle — foam rinses out of your hair completely . . . washing away all dirt and dandruff.

After one fragrant shampoo your hair feels and looks so clean — alive with fresh youthful beauty.

This weekend freshen *your* hair with gentle "Vaseline" Liquid Shampoo — bring back its natural loveliness. "Vaseline" Liquid Shampoo is perfect for oily, dry or water-fast dyed hair.

Wonderful for children's hair too, because its wonder-foam lather is so very gentle — softer than velvet.

The super-soft formula with the gentle, instant lather

NOW AT ALL CHEMISTS AND STORES

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SPECTATORS at the polo tournament in Melbourne included Mrs. Charlie Hooke, of "Wirragulla," Dungog, Sandra Bragg, of "Rossgole," Aberdeen, and her sister, Sally, and Mrs. Alex Macleod, of "Llangollan," Cassilis. Mrs. Hooke wore a grey wool dress, and Mrs. Macleod covered her skirt and twinset with an emerald topcoat.

QUEENSLAND TEAM'S MASCOT goat, Ginty, is held by player Norman Hoey (right), who discusses the polo with Mr. and Mrs. Wally Gunn, of Goondiwindi. Ginty belongs to the Gunns' son and daughter, Jim and Robyn.

AUSTRALASIAN *Gold Cup* IN MELBOURNE

SHADED FROM THE SUN, Elizabeth Latham, of "Ellerston," Scone (left), and Mrs. Ian Morrison, of Melbourne, watch the polo in comfort. A topical choice were Mrs. Morrison's earrings in the form of polo ponies, and she tied a gay scarf round her neck.

FLEMINGTON Racecourse, in Melbourne, resounded with an unusual noise when crack of polo stick and ball mingled with the cheers of polo enthusiasts at the Australasian Gold Cup Polo Tournament and the T.B. Guest Cup and H. F. Creswick Cup matches.

Eight teams from New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland, South Australia, and New Zealand competed for the Stradbroke Gold Cup—blue riband of polo.

Matches were played on two specially made polo grounds on the flat. Cars drew up to the edge of the field, and ponies with their colorfully jacketed riders galloped excitingly close to spectators at times.

There was a happy informality as canvas chairs, rugs, shooting sticks, cameras, and picnic baskets were set up round the field.

Between chukkas, players joined the spectators, who handed out cool drinks and patted the ponies.

THERE was almost a continuous round of gaiety for polo players and spectators, for at least one party was held each night after the matches. Among hosts and hostesses were Mrs. Alan Calvert, of "Kornong," Nerrin Nerrin, Victoria, and her son Alan, who gave a cocktail party at Menzies Hotel, and Colonel and Mrs. A. V. Pope, who gave a luncheon at their Mt. Eliza home.

• • •

COCKTAILS were served on the terrace and guests were able to saunter round the lovely garden at "Miegunyah," Toorak, when Sir Russell and Lady Grimwade entertained the visiting players at their home.

NEW SOUTH WALES visitors included brothers Jim and Bob Ashton and their wives. Mr. and Mrs. Jim Ashton flew back to Sydney last Wednesday. After Easter they will close up their Double Bay home and spend the winter at their country property, "Millamolong," Mandurama.

• • •

I NOTICED Mrs. Dougal Bray, of "Ranelagh," Eugowra, wore sunglasses on a smart gold chain round her neck during Gold Cup polo matches at Flemington. Large gold hinges on the glasses matched the chain. She bought them in Honolulu last June, when her husband, captain of the New South Wales B team, was playing there.

ONE of the youngest spectators at the polo was Philippa Boyd, three-months-old daughter of the John Boyds, of "Murrabong," Young. Comfortably stowed in a moses basket at the back of her parents' car, Philippa went to the matches every day while her mother watched her father play with the New South Wales B team.

• • •

LONG straw fronds waved from the unusual straw hat worn by Mrs. Alec Creswick, of "Kent Park," Ferntree Gully, Victoria. Crown of the hat was covered with pretty grape - like bunches of cowrie shells.

Anne

QUARTET. Mrs. John Boyd, of "Murrabong," Young (left), Judy Hagon, of "Greendale," Canowindra, Gordon Dowling, of Young, and Mr. Boyd were at the party given by Mr. and Mrs. Aubrey Gibson at the Dorchester Hotel.

INTERESTED ONLOOKERS. Mr. Bob Mackay, of "Tabbil," Dungog (left), Mrs. Bob Ashton, of "Checkers," Cargo, Mrs. Mackay, and Mr. Irwin Maple-Brown, of "Springfield," Goulburn, watch play in the Gold Cup polo tournament. Mrs. Ashton's grey wool cap was trimmed with beads.

VANTAGE POINT on their car bonnet for Mr. W. Horton Browne, of "Wirruna," Young, and his daughter, Frances. Mr. Horton Browne played for the Peninsula team.

STATION WAGGON ARRIVALS at Flemington for the polo tournament were David Aitken (left), Mrs. John Haydon, of Murrurundi, Mrs. McBride White, of Melbourne, Mrs. Guy Haydon, and Janet Ranken, of Quirindi.

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Whichever way he wears it

you'll like him better in an

AKUBRA "CLUBMAN"

- FEATURING THE COLOUR-BLENDED TWEED FINISH
- AND THE GOOD-LOOKING DOUBLE-EDGE BRIM
- IT'S AKUBRA'S LATEST STYLE LEADER . . .
- AUSTRALIA'S MOST POPULAR NEW HAT SHAPE

It's a *different* hat, this new Akubra "Clubman" . . . a hat that *does* something for any man. Five colour-blended shades: Flannel, Conifer, Cuban, Havana and Clipper Green—all in the smart Tweed finish; all with the double-edge brim. The Akubra "Clubman" is available at his usual hatter's.

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YOUTH FEATURE by Kay Melaun

Meeting a bad end

One of the worries of Communist-dominated European countries is their young people's lack of discipline and courtesy. According to report, someone suggested that the rowdies should be isolated in labor camps to give their families some peace.

THIS particular story went on about "demoralisation and hooliganism." Except that it had the usual dreary propaganda twist attributing the behaviour to "the class enemy," it was the routine type of hands-raised-in-horror report.

Everybody everywhere always seems to be worrying about young people's behaviour, although there's a good deal less reason to worry on this score now than for many years past.

Of course there's a hooligan element here as well as in Poland or elsewhere.

It is much milder here, probably because of Australia's relative tranquillity and its emergence, comparatively untouched, from World War II.

Youthful unrest usually follows an upheaval such as a war.

Two obvious instances of this are the excesses of the 1920's and of Restoration times in England, which were vulgarised so lucratively in "Forever Amber."

And most people attribute the unrest to a severance of parental control.

Nowadays there is a tendency to conclude that all boys and girls are perilously close to going to the dogs, because of the lurid stories of gangs of rowdies prowling the U.S.A., and the Creep-boys in England, plus the local imitations of both.

Actually the Creeps and such are given so much publicity only because they are so extraordinary.

They are the exceptions that prove the rule that the present generation of boys and girls is a good deal more balanced and sensible than their parents were at the same age.

Today's teenagers' parents were young in the reprehensible 'twenties and the sad, frustrated depression days of the 1930's.

By now most of them have conveniently forgotten the follies of those times, or if they remember them it is only with a smug smile over gay and harmless pranks.

They get away with it, parentally speaking, because to youngsters they and their cronies seem so dull that it is impossible to imagine their kicking up their heels.

"Look at that," says Dad, red with indignation, indicating a story about a Creep-boy.

"Girls' ways certainly have changed—and not for the better," comments Mum when she reads about a call-girl.

In the shock of it all Dad and Mum subsequently argue that their children have gone to the dogs because Tom came home at six o'clock the other morning and Teresa smoked a cigarette on the top of the bus.

Make no mistake about their being right. They are. It's only their conclusion that the kids will come to a bad end that's a bit extreme.

Teresa certainly looks like a tough when she puffs away in her regardless, mannerless fashion; Tom is an idiot if he thinks he can stay out all night and make a fist of his job or his studies the next day.

Also when people put on acts like these they can end by being the part after a while.

Just the same, it would be interesting to get hold of the picture taken of Dad during that undergrad rag that nearly finished him at the university or Mum doing the Charleston in rolled stockings at the party Grandma distinctly forbade her to attend.

Middle age is so pompous, so forgetful of its own youth. Old age, apt to compare itself flatteringly with mellow wine, is so vinegary.

Yet there's everything to be said for parents. The next time "they" snipe at you, remember that to be a parent is of necessity to be professionally in the right.

The particular parental attitude in your case has been crystallising ever since Mum and Dad hung adoringly over your cot saying "Don't" when you wanted to suck your thumb.

It's not a bad idea to listen when "they" tell you to do this or not to do that. Listen, not simply because they're older. Being older doesn't necessarily mean knowing better.

But even parents have been young once. They, too, once got up to foolish capers like yours, incredible though it may seem now.

They found out that antics don't pay, and many of them made the discovery by sorry experience. They just don't want it to happen to you.

A bachelor's opinion:

DON'T GET MARRIED

AN astonishing number of old married men are ready to give the solemn advice "Don't get married" to bachelors contemplating the bonds.

Some of these Benedicts complain that marriage hasn't given them anything; others say that their domestic life is one endless wrangle and that all other men getting married face the same fate.

In my opinion the men who expect to get something out of marriage are the ones who never give anything to it, and this attitude is very largely responsible for their strife.

They wouldn't dream of blaming themselves. It's all the fault of the nagging wife they're "tied" to.

The reason a wife nags is usually that she can't find any other way of expressing her resentment at her husband's selfishness.

Anyway, considering the few men who live to a ripe old bachelorhood, the warnings are wasted. There are too many enticements on the way.

DISC DIGEST

NOT so long ago I felt that "Blues In The Night" was Rosemary Clooney's best recording, but I'm not so sure now that I've heard her sing "Tenderly" on DO3621. In a short seven years this tune has established itself as a standard, and it always rates a position among the first handful of year-in-year-out favorites. Clooney's version is not to be missed. Backing is "I'll Be Around." Incidentally, when you hear Joan Crawford "sing" "Tenderly" in the film "Torch Song" (India Adams is the actual singer), listen to the piano accompaniment. It is played by Walter Gross, the composer of the tune.

THE major recording companies are now introducing each month discs from their international series, selected to appeal to New Australians. Aussies will enjoy most of them, too. The current release includes the Don Cossacks (Russian), Marlene Dietrich (German), and Luciano Virgili (Italian).

* * *

UNLESS memory is playing tricks, "Coquette" was the title and theme song of Mary Pickford's first talkie some 23 years ago. Johnny Green wrote it. Now it's being revived in the movie "Easy To Love," and it's sung on MGM5168 by song stylist Billy Eckstine. Coupling is one of his earliest hits, "The Wildest Gal In Town." Both are set in gentle mood and should appeal to the collector of the less-obvious type of popular song.

* * *

BING CROSBY and son Gary have made their second co-starring record (DO70078) and the fans are sure to be enthusiastic over their easy-going style and close harmony. They've picked two old-timers for this merry session, "Down By The Riverside," and "What A Little Moonlight Can Do." Bing's trusty colleague, John Scott Trotter, provides the solid background.

— BERNARD FLETCHER

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"Olympic" school for equestrians

ENGLISH show jumper and judge Mr. John Shedden watches some of the pupils at the Olympic jumping school recently held at "Retford Park," Boweral, N.S.W. Mr. Shedden has come to Australia to help train any likely equestrian representatives for the 1956 Olympic Games.

JOHN KELLY, of Victoria (left), changes a dressage bit for a cross-country bit. Despite long hours at the school, pupils enjoyed the course thoroughly.

ANNE TATE, of Melbourne (above), with her champion bay gelding, Don Quixote, with which she won the important Garryowen trophy at last year's Melbourne Show. The trophy is given for best girl rider, horse, and turn-out.

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● ***Australian show-rings where displays of Olympic-style riding are to be held this year should see a standard of horsemanship never before equalled in this country.***

RECENTLY 21 horsemen and horsewomen from all States except Queensland attended a 12-day school in Olympic-standard horsemanship at "Retford Park," Bowral, N.S.W., to train for show events.

"Retford Park" is the estate of Mr. Sam Hordern, president of the Equestrian Federation of Australia.

Among enthusiastic pupils at the school were the Machattie sisters, Kate and Mary, of "Moonambil," Coonamble, N.S.W., who will take part in riding events in this year's Sydney Show.

Object of the school, at which students did nothing but talk, live, and dream horses, was to coach horses and riders in Olympic-style show jumping.

In charge was Mr. John Shedden, noted English show jumper and judge, who, at the request of the British Horse Society, undertook the initial training of four of the horses for the Olympic Games in England in 1948.

He was also responsible for the early training of Stella, one of the horses which represented England in the Three-Day Event at Helsinki, Finland.

Victorian horses came by float and trailer, but pupils from the southern and western States rode borrowed horses. Treasure, a horse owned by Mrs. A. F. B. O'Connor, of Avoca, Tasmania, was air-freighted from his home to the mainland.

Pupils at the school either "bached" in empty estate quarters or put up at local hotels.

The daily programme was a two-hour morning school of "dressage" (from the French "dresser," to train), testing the rider's command of the horse, and the horse's ability to carry out complicated orders; and an afternoon school of two hours devoted to Olympic-style show jumping and rough cross-country riding.

In the great Olympic "one-man-one-horse" Three-Day Event, apart from a dressage and show-jumping test, an exacting 22½-mile cross-country course must be ridden.

With a working day starting at 5.45 a.m. and perhaps not finishing until 10 o'clock at night, living-in students found it easier to pile into cars or utilities and drive into Bowral for a hot evening meal.

JANE McINTYRE, of Victoria (above), takes Ross Field's Contessa on a slide down a steep gorge. Men and girls tackle the slide down with equal assurance. BELOW: Anne Tate takes Don Quixote over six oil drums with red-and-white bars and white wings. Jumps can be as tricky as a judge wishes, and may include walls and bales of hay.

DAVID WOOD, of Victoria (above), offers a thirst-quencher to Margaret Davidson, of Adelaide, after a morning's work-out. BELOW: Parkland vista of "Retford Park" affords a pleasant resting place for riders on one of the afternoon cross-country rides. Boots are worn by the horses to protect their hoofs and legs from cuts and scratches.

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slow and gentle, speaking to the dog softly and not touching it for some time.

At last he began to stroke the dog's head. The dog got to its feet and barked, but all it could manage was just one little bark.

He picked it up and walked back to the car under which the hen was still alone and terrified. Well, the dog's one thing, however scared or sick it may be, and a hen's another, and he couldn't imagine how to speak to the hen so that it would not take him for an enemy.

He set the dog down on the pavement and said: "Now, you just stand there. I'm going to take you home and give you some food and a warm place to sleep, but I've got to get this hen, too."

The dog watched him and listened to his voice, but couldn't stand still and couldn't understand. It managed to bark again once. It was a mongrel, with soft brown hair and sad eyes, part cocker, part terrier, and part two or three other things.

It ran off a little, whimpering, and then came back and asked if the boy wanted it to go away. Whimpering softly, it seemed to say, "Don't ask that. Don't want me to go away."

And the boy said, "Now, will you just stand there a minute while I see about the hen? There's a lost hen under the car here that I've got to take home and take care of, too."

The dog seemed to understand a little, so the boy went around to the back of the car, where the hen was sitting as if it were laying or hatching. He began to talk to it; but a bird is a bird, even if it's a hen, and a bird, even if it's lost and sick, has got to be afraid of a human being.

The hen got to its feet, but not all the way up; not because there wasn't room enough under the car, but because in fear all creatures, even man, do not rise to their full height; only in pride or exultation do they stand very tall, as men do when they are glad about themselves or as roosters do when they are overwhelmed about themselves and must push themselves to the limits of themselves, and then, half dying with joy, crow about who they are and what they can do.

The lost hen wobbled to the next car, and then to the third car, the boy going after it slowly and speaking to it softly. He had to crawl under the third car to reach the hen and bring it out.

When the dog saw the hen it began to dance, growling softly—partly, perhaps, because it was a dog and the bird was a bird, and partly, perhaps, because another lost creature had been rescued.

"All right," the boy said to both of them. "Now we're going home."

The dog stayed close to the boy's heels, barking now and then, and the hen stopped being frightened and seemed even to fall asleep, or at least half asleep. When the boy got home he picked up the dog and went in through the back door. The family were at the dining-room table.

"Barney?" his mother called out.

"Yes," he said.

He stepped into the dining-room, the dog under one arm, the hen under the other, the eyes of both creatures open and unsure. Everybody at the table stared at them.

"I found them," the boy said. "They were hiding under cars on Van Ness. They were both crying. I thought I'd better bring them home."

"Orphans of the storm, is that it?" the father said. "That's not a bad-looking dog."

"Can I keep them?" the boy asked.

"A dog and a hen, Barney?" the mother said.

"They won't be any trouble," he said. "I'll fix up a small coop with a nest and a perch for the hen, and the dog can sleep in a box in the garage. Can I keep them?"

"Can he?" his father asked his mother.

"Well," his mother said, "are you sure you want to? I mean, nobody keeps hens in their yards any more, and dogs—some dogs—have a way of getting the people who own them into a lot of trouble."

"I'd like to keep them," the boy said. "They were lost. Nobody wanted them. I found them. They were afraid of me. I had to talk to them. It wasn't easy, especially the hen. I didn't buy them, but I do feel they are mine, and I'd like to keep them."

"Well," his mother said. She turned to his father. "Are you sure it's all right?"

"I don't know why not," his father said.

"All right," his mother said. She got up. "I'll help you put them away until after you've had your supper."

"No," the boy said. "You go ahead. They're both hungry." He looked down at the dog and the hen and noticed that they were looking at each other and weren't afraid of each other any more.

"I'll give the dog a little warm milk to start, and the hen maybe a little rice or something. I won't be a minute. You sit down, Mother."

His mother went to the kitchen with him and warmed milk for the dog. The boy set the hen on the floor, and his mother sprinkled rice in front of it, and soon both creatures began to eat and come alive.

After supper the boy went to the garage with his brother, and together they fixed the hen a small coop with a perch and a nest, and the dog a little house made out of a small box, with rags on the bottom for a bed.

While they were out in the garage the boy's father and mother sat in the living-room and talked.

"Well, he's said nothing about a bike so far," the man said. "That bike meant everything in the world to him. You know it did."

"Yes," the woman said, "but that bike only. His bike. The bike he bought with his own money. No other bike can take its place. Something else has got to."

"A stray dog and a miserable hen?" the man said.

"Well, yes," the woman said. "They're his. I don't think he'll ever have another bike. I don't think he'll ever want another one. The next time he saves up some money he'll buy something else. But he did love his bike. It became part of him. He knows it's gone for ever, though."

"Then I shouldn't surprise him and bring home a bike?" the man said.

"No," the woman said. "He wouldn't like it. Not really, I mean. Oh, he'd like it, of course, but you know what I mean. It couldn't possibly be what his own bike was, and it's no good having anything that isn't the best that can be had of its kind."

"Yes, I suppose so," the man said. "Well, it was quite a storm at that, wasn't it?"

"Yes," the woman said. "Everybody's talked of nothing else."

"I can't imagine," the man said, "why you let him ride his bike all the way out to Skaggs Bridge in the rain to help."

"Can you imagine my asking him not to?" the woman said. "He wanted to. It seemed silly, of course; but it wasn't silly to him, and he did help. I mean, he did actually do the same work as everybody else."

The man shut his eyes a moment to see if he could see his son racing through the rain to the swollen river, and he did see him; he saw the whole thing very clearly.

He opened his eyes and laughed quietly, for he knew he would never stop seeing a boy on a bike riding to the rescue of the world, to the loss of his own bike and the forfeiture of his own exemption from mortal responsibility.

The woman laughed, too, and then both of them quickly stopped laughing to resume their expressions of earnestness: for they heard him down the hall with his brother and sister, all of them on their way to the living-room.

"We'll sing that same song after a minute," the man whispered. "'Rescue the Perishing.'"

"Yes," the woman said.

(Copyright)

Continuing . . . The Bike

from page 10

New show for children

AMERICAN and English children are fascinated viewers of a new sort of television programme for youngsters—"Jolly Gene (in England it's "Billy Bean") and his Fun Machine."

"Gene" (or "Billy") is one of several engaging puppets who work the fun machine. The others are Yoohoo the Cuckoo Bird, Waldo the Dodo ("I'm extinct, you know.")

The fun machine is a crazy hotch-potch of all the "inventions" that delight children—an ordered disorder of cogs and wheels and switches and "don't switch" switches, of bells and buzzers and "alphabetors."

In the April 6 issue of A.M. there's a picture-story about this enormously successful show.

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Ingredients:
1 can (16 ozs.) Bass Fish Cutlets, 1½ cups mashed potato, 1 egg (small), 1 small onion minced, 1 teaspoon vinegar, salt and cayenne, 1 tablespoon chopped parsley.

Method. Combine potato, onion and parsley. Add beaten egg and vinegar. Mix in fish (drained and flaked). Season to taste and cool.
Shape into cakes on floured board and place on greased baking dish. Top each cake with Barbecue Sauce, and bake in a moderate oven, 15-20 minutes.

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silently. The year before, Rachel at least would have been loud in sympathy, the day before, Grace bitter in mockery; now neither uttered a word.

My uncles apparently noticed nothing; perhaps they had grown used to their wives' silence; the quality of their own was unchanged. They didn't know. If it was not a matter for children, no more, I soon understood, was it a matter for men.

It was a matter for the Sylvester women.

As soon as the males had tramped out my Aunt Grace warned me against any rash speech, in especial to Tobias.

"Charlotte being fearful," said she plainly, "lest he do Charles an injury. If there be one crime Sylvesters do hate and despise above all others, 'tis deceitfulness; and Charlie have deceived all two mortal years. Charlotte, bind up that wound."

It was strange to hear Grace take the lead; but Charlotte sat withdrawn in thought—silent, passive, will-less, seemingly, as her father-in-law at the last, in that very chair, had sat before her.

The look I had glimpsed on her face the night before, a look, most new to her, of withdrawal, seemed already the settled cast of her countenance; the new lines already engraved. Grace, by taking up the burden of leadership, did Charlotte kindness; as my Aunt Rachel, in her degree, poured Charlotte a last extra cup.

It was my only consolation, to see them thus re-united, no longer at odds, at last come together again. My own readmittance to their confidence I felt almost undeserved; but as we sat about the breakfast-table—the men gone out, Fanny furnished by Rachel with a tray—I felt myself for the first time, as we talked together so gravely, truly one of the Sylvester women . . .

Continuing . . The Gipsy in the Parlor

from page 5

"'Tis so hard to credit," sighed my Aunt Rachel, "I credit it scarcely yet. Have Fanny also deceived we two mortal years?"

"And would two years more," said my Aunt Grace.

"It was what the French call the coup de foudre," I put in. "I think that means it's like a thunderbolt. I mean, when Fanny and Charles fell in love, at the Assembly."

"No doubt but Charlie'd turn any head living," agreed Rachel unhappily. "'Ee didn't see he, my lamb; but for dancing, and deportment, and brave Sylvester looks, him outshone all . . . What remains mysterious to I be how her so turned his?"

"Didn't Charlotte say herself, on Fanny's first coming, her charm be felt by males solely?" This was my Aunt Grace; speaking, however, without the least malice; speaking rather as a doctor of a disease. "Moreover, Fanny in her peacock gown were no poor sight . . ."

"Which Charlotte purchased for she her own self," sighed Rachel—again, unmaliciously; diagnosing. "I do believe maybe that compassed it, Grace; for I saw Luke's eye also on her. 'Tis certain Fanny have a charm for males."

"Question be," said Grace sharply, "how far 'twill overbear all else. Can her put Charles so at loggerheads with all Sylvesters, to wed without his parents' blessing? Which Charlotte at least I be sure will never give?"

But no promptings roused Charlotte.

"Dear soul!—and what of Stephen?" cried Rachel—even her mild tones almost impatient. "How'm Stephen to fare here, how'm he to bide here even, seeing his own betrothed Charlie's bride?"

"Seeing she walk nightly to Charlie's bed," said my Aunt Grace crudely. "Think of that, will 'ee? No male flesh and blood's to endure it—even so sainted a flesh as Stephen's may now appear. 'Twill drive he from home. First of all Sylvesters, him'll be driven from his home."

"I think also of the young ones," said Rachel. "To fall in love, seemingly, strikes Fanny down; I say that to bear a babe be utterly beyond her powers. And 'tis now more than ever before the farm do need a new, strong generation."

"Would 'ee call home your own two from Canada?"

"My two be faring so bravely." (I must repeat it, not one of these exchanges carried a hint of malice. My Aunt Rachel stated a fact: her two were faring so bravely, they'd sent her at Christmas such a beaver muff as Frampton never saw.)

SORROWFULLY, Aunt Rachel said, "So stoutly they'm making their way, to recall they would be a most wrong act. It must rejoice we to know the same of yours—and of Charlotte's second also. Charlie be here at hand, returned as though by Providence."

"Not if he'm to wed Fanny Davis," said Grace.

So we talked, in grave, unhappy tones, my Aunts Grace and Rachel and myself around the remainder-cluttered breakfast-table, my Aunt Charlotte still saying nothing; until presently, as from all our talk no more emerged than the catastrophe's completeness—diagnosis, not remedy—we too fell silent.

And so, incredibly, heard the parlor-clock strike. It hadn't struck for two years, its chimes stopped to spare Fanny's nerves. It was a piece of sheer impishness on her part, to pause and set them off again, on her way downstairs.

She entered with a light and sprightly step: cool and trim, her short hair neatly combed over her forehead, her dress, mysteriously less limp, freshened by a little white lace collar.

There was nothing grand in all this, it was no more than any clever woman could have done for herself. The effect produced was disproportionate. As my aunts, three big, aproned women, rose instinctively to their feet, Fanny might have been the mistress of the house visiting her kitchen.

"Good morning," said she smiling. "You see I practise my powers . . . I suppose they all know, Charlotte?"

This was the first time, I noticed it, she ever called my Aunt Charlotte anything but Mrs. Toby. If Charlotte noticed, too, she gave no sign.

"All know," she agreed. "Us have just been discussing 'ee; 'ee and Charlie." She turned back to the table, and from it carried a pile of plates to the washing-up bowl. The china clinked as she moved; and Fanny Davis, looking after her, smiled again.

"And what all know, all don't quite like?" she suggested lightly. "In time no doubt I shall have gratitude for bringing Charles home again!" She sat down and in kind explanatory tones continued:

"For it's quite obvious things can't go on here as they are," said Fanny Davis. "But for my illness, I must have acted long since! — you good creatures growing more toil-worn every day, and the farm on its rapid way to ruin!"

Across the stillness, for no one immediately spoke, anger rippled like a catspaw over water. I saw my Aunt Rachel lift up her head incredulously, the color flame in Grace's cheek, while Fanny sat and smiled.

Grace found speech first.

"Leaving we for the moment aside," said she, "and what do 'ee know of the farm?"

"Only what all Frampton knows," said Fanny Davis carelessly—but with what deadly aim! "As to general mismanagement, you know, and bad judgment, and all that. As to Luke and Matthew spending rather much time in the George on market-day; Tobias such a sad lack! I'm told old Mr. Sylvester went quite the same way," sighed Fanny Davis, "but he, of course, could lean on Tobias. . . ."

This no one answered. There was no answer. What Fanny had gleaned from her gossips was no more than my aunts must have long known, though without ever openly admitting it; even I had perceived the life of the farm as it were slowing down, losing momentum. Fanny Davis couldn't be answered because she spoke the truth—and not least as to my aunts themselves. They did now seem toilworn, old and patient and toilworn, slow-moving and silent, with no more laughter in them. . . .

But only since Fanny came! I nearly cried this revelation aloud, as I suddenly perceived the whole sequence of events since she first set foot in my aunts' parlor. That I had been most beguiled of all made my disillusion but completer.

"So you see why you owe me gratitude," said she. "For if Charles doesn't soon return to take command, I for one can't conceive what's to become of you all. Dear me, you'd need a whole almshouse!" cried Fanny gaily. "It might be called the Sylvester Arms!"

It was a dangerous moment, while she laughed. But it passed. Grace had moved only one angry step when a sound from Charlotte halted her. Charlotte had but broken a cup, she did not speak; still, the momentary check gave Fanny time to skim safely on.

"But Charles shall return," she assured them, "and for your part you mustn't, you really mustn't think too hardly of me. Hearts, alas, can't be controlled!"

"Nor appetite?" said my Aunt Grace — a little danger still in her voice. "Nor appetite, Fanny Davis? I b'aint speaking of the lusts of the flesh, Fanny Davis; but of the lust, or appetite, for mastery; which I in my time have striven with, to its casting out. . . ."

Fanny's response to this last challenge was unhesitating. With a most smooth, engaging motion she rose and dipped over upon Charlotte.

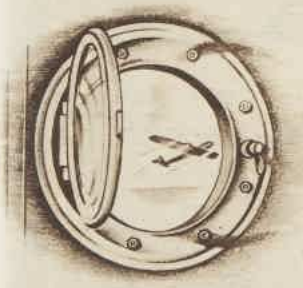
"Be cross as you like!" she cried vivaciously. "This is where I find understanding, in my good Charlotte!"

Charlotte stood passive, merely knocking the handle off a cup.

"See, even the lightest task too much for her!" cried Fanny Davis compassionately. "The first thing I shall do, as mistress here, will be to hire some young local girl to relieve her at the sink. For shame, Charlotte!" fluted Fanny Davis. "If I've no servant for you yet, at least let Grace or Rachel take her turn!"

I still, today, cannot believe my Aunt Charlotte capable of deliberate false-dealing; yet while she stood there so humbly fumbling about her humble task, she had undoubtedly disguised from us all her true formidableness. My heart was torn for her; Grace and Rachel watched her anxiously. What we had all forgotten was the

To page 45



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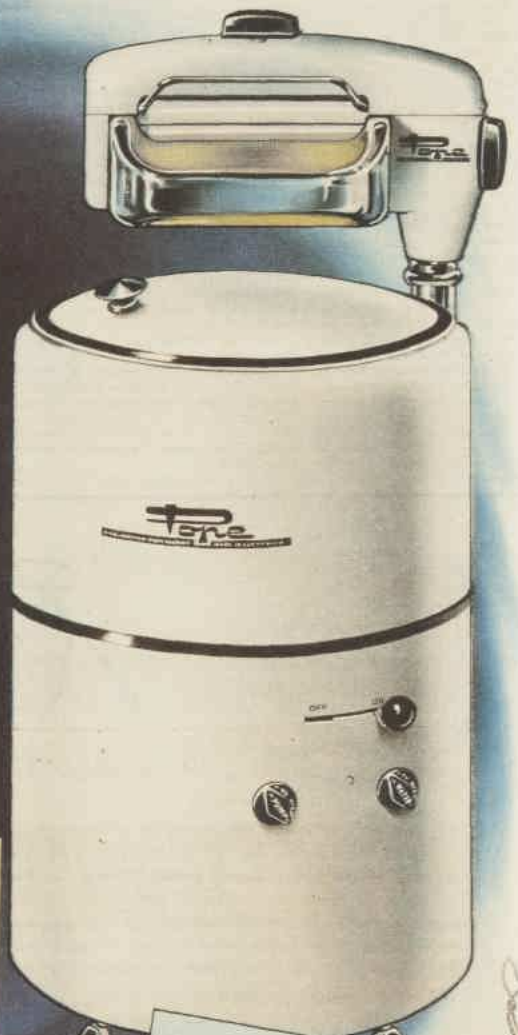

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Sylvester inability to do two things at once.

Charlotte, now Sylvester to the marrow, had been thinking. She had been thinking steadily, as we were soon to discover, for the last hour. The bread-knife slipped because she was thinking, not of bread; thinking of something else, she let even her blood flow unstanched . . . I do not know who was the more startled, ourselves or Fanny Davis, when Charlotte, most placidly cracking a last plate clean across, finally ceased to think, and presented the result of her thought.

"Grace and Rachel will take their turn sure enough," said she, "while I be at London."

. . . . . .

It is extraordinarily difficult to convey, so long after, and now that running up to London has become in all parts of England no more than an excursion-commonplace, the impact of my Aunt Charlotte's placid reply.

Today, Mothers' Unions, Women's Institutes, members of the Women's Voluntary Service, descend on London in amiable hordes: "conveyed by chartered coaches to inspect royal wedding-gifts, applaud local choirs, or just for the ride. Individual women resort thither no less freely, to meet friends or fight a sale. But at the time of which I write, to visit London was a considerable undertaking — and this though the train-services were already excellent.

The adventure was rather moral. To simpler, remoter communities (among which ours about Frampton must be counted), London and Babylon were still called cousins. Even setting foot to platform at Paddington, our own West Country terminus, one forded a dubious stream.

That I travelled regularly back and forth was a local wonder, productive of prestige to the Sylvesters, an exaggerated estimate of my parents' income, and equally exaggerated prophecies of my own early demise . . .

Continuing . . The Gipsy in the Parlor

from page 43

Thus to hear Charlotte speak so placidly of going to London naturally astounded us all. Fanny recovered her wits first.

"To London!" cried she. "You go to London? Dear Charlotte, but why?"

"To have a word wi' my son Charlie," returned Charlotte calmly. Still calmly—how we had underestimated her! —she surveyed the china-wreckage about the sink, and with a casual gesture intimated that Rachel might put all away.

"Naturally save what be damaged," said she, with a lightness to rival Fanny's. "That throw out, bor; Sylvesters b'ain't used to mended crockery . . . Yes, b'ain't it true," said my Aunt Charlotte, "only thought brings wisdom how to act? So my thoughts be come to their issue: all 'ee tells of you and he do still seem so astounding, and so full of import moreover to all of we, and so unvouched for moreover by Charlie's own self, I've a mind to seek he out in London, if but to set my own thoughts at rest."

"Charlotte!" breathed my Aunt Rachel. "Oh, Charlotte, b'ain't 'ee the masterpiece!—and 'ee shall have my beaver muff."

It took five days to get my Aunt Charlotte and Fanny off to London. For Fanny went too. Upon this she was absolutely determined, her pretext being to take care of Charlotte on the journey; and though all strongly suspected the more interested motive of aiming to stiffen Charlie's neck, there were reasons why no one attempted to stop her.

Charlotte was by no means averse from company, even in her heyday a trip to London would have seemed a very venturesome act, and from a practical point of view Fanny was obviously best spared at the farm. (I spent all my eloquence begging Charlotte to take me —pressing my claims as native Londoner, seasoned train-catcher, friend of Clara Blow. To no avail. It was not a matter for children.)

In addition, my Aunts Grace and Rachel wanted to turn out the parlor, which they could do far best in Fanny's absence. They were so in love with this project I believe they would actually have pressed Fanny's going, had she needed it; oblivious of the situation's irony. For quite possibly they would be readying the same chamber to receive again, after two years, a same bride, but different groom . . .

It took five days to get Charlotte and Fanny off, because there was so much to prepare.

In the first place, they took their food.

Neither, I believe, contemplated a stay of more than two or three nights at most. They still took food. All knew there was food to be had in London; I myself, for example, somehow subsisted through each winter: still, they took provisions.

We baked. Large pasties, in form borrowed from our Cornish neighbors, we acknowledged the most nourishing food portable. We therefore baked pasties. My Aunt Charlotte, I think, with some idea of bearing gifts, ordained cakes also: the kitchen smelled like Christmas. There was also the matter of breakfast; so they took eggs, and a tea-caddy.

There was, also, the matter of their costumes. My Aunt Charlotte's wardrobe was perfectly adequate to her station, and Rachel lent her beaver muff; certain froggings of black braid were nonetheless transferred from a mantle of Grace's to Charlotte's Sunday-best.

All the flowers were cut from her best bonnet, steamed, and re-attached; the strings were treated similarly, also ironed. Her skirt and bodice were sponged with vinegar. Her under-linen required no attention at all, the store was so great and so immaculate we had but to pick out the best.

My aunts were wonderfully fair-minded women. Thoroughly as they now disliked and distrusted her, everything that could be done was done for Fanny also. Or was this but one more manifestation of the Sylvester pride? Looking back, I think it may have been; I cannot recall anything they did for Fanny with their own hands, as they so eagerly labored for Charlotte. What I do recall is the point of irony in Grace's voice as she remarked — Fanny possessing no mantle at all, only a shawl— 'twas pity Charlotte spent all on a ball-gown . . .

So far as millinery went, she could have none: it appeared that the contents of her carpet-bag had never been augmented by so much as a shift from the first-class dressmaker in Plymouth. Fanny possessed the dress she stood up in, and two limp dresses more, and a peacock silk ball-gown. Her under-linen all charitably ignored.

My Aunt Charlotte, in all this bustle, was rejuvenated.

I can see now that bustle, during the last two years, had been precisely what she lacked: quietude was more than unnatural, it was unwholesome to her. The bare effort of keeping her voice down, so as not to upset Fanny's nerves, had worked seriously upon Charlotte's: the necessity of avoiding all housework noises made her natural avocation a burden almost unendurable.

Now, cooking for the journey, dressmaking till all hours, retrimming bonnets and sorting linen—vociferous again from one end of the house to the other, because if Fanny was on her feet why should she be treated as an invalid?—my aunts released a two years'

To page 46

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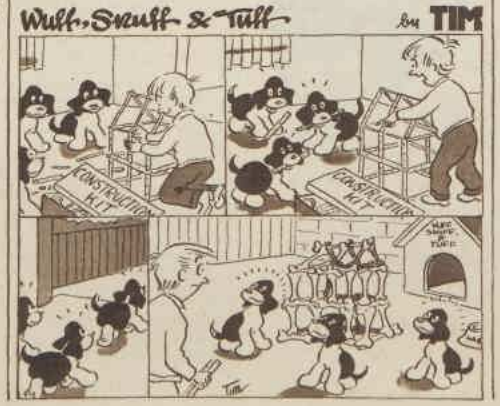

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Continuing . . **The Gipsy in the Parlor**

from page 45

accumulation of noise. To Charlotte, it was like water to a plant. In five days she looked five years younger.

Fanny Davis, with her small smile, observed and said nothing. I alone, I think, observed her. Our relations had cooled; she felt me under her thumb again, but so to speak on my promotion.

I was no longer so unquestionedly her little friend: she suspected me still of a weakness for Clara Blow. Which indeed I still harbored, to my unhappiness; for I alone—again—saw Fanny likelier than Charlotte to win the battle in London.

Because I knew Fanny Davis so well. The scales of romantic attachment dropped from my eyes as completely as suddenly: children so hate duplicity. I couldn't forgive her two years' foxing of me, her joining with me in surmise as to my Cousin Charles' whereabouts—as she had done more than once, probably with a letter from him in her pocket.

I none the less admitted her cleverness—because she had foxed me. Upon perfectly dispassionate reflection, I rated her so much cleverer than my Cousin Charles, or my Aunt Charlotte, or Clara Blow, I didn't see how one of them, or all combined, stood a chance against her.

Moreover, if Charlotte looked rejuvenated, Fanny Davis looked pretty.

Bustle, astonishingly enough, appeared to suit her also. Fanny Davis quietly bloomed. She found a way of arranging her short hair that was almost fashionable: an Alexandra fringe kissed her eyebrows.

I thought of Clara's galumphing coiffure, and hoped Charles insensible to elegance.

There also arose, discussed against the smell of baking and hot irons, the question of where Fanny and Charlotte should lodge.

Here Charlotte spoke strongly: all reputable Norfolk having from time immemorial put up at the Flower in Hand, by Bishopsgate Station. My Aunt Grace proposed the Bush, time immemorial used by Devon folk, hard by Paddington; so that one felt as 'twere the West Country backing one, by its regular service of powerful trains.

Most quietly now, most insinuatingly, Fanny Davis put in her word; weren't both these nice places, however nice, really no more nor less than public-houses? For two females alone perhaps—unsuitable?

"A small, quiet hotel," suggested Fanny Davis, "if one can't stay with one's friends or relations—wouldn't some small, quiet hotel be really more suitable?"

I felt her eye on me as she spoke. She had already breathed to me a plan which I at once saw impossible, of staying with my parents. I said firmly that I knew of several small, quiet hotels. Fortunately no one took any notice of me; pressed, I couldn't have named one.

"Where Fanny bides I naturally mayn't control," said Charlotte more firmly still. "Where I bide will be the Flower in Hand."

Of course Fanny had no choice, because Charlotte would be paying. They went to the Flower in Hand.

I can no better describe the scope of these preparations than by saying that my uncles noticed them: with the consequence that Charlotte was forced into the first untruth I ever heard her tell.

She said she was taking Fanny to London to see a doctor.

It was either tell that, my aunts agreed amongst themselves, or tell all, and Fanny Davis acquiesced in the deception. She was, I think, no more eager to thrust enlightenment upon Stephen any sooner than was necessary; for all her confidence in his understanding — which she never ceased to affirm — she could not fail to anticipate a painful moment.

"Only that, dear, no more," she assured me more than once. "That it must be painful, to both of us, goes without saying; but as soon as the first shock is over, Stephen will understand. Indeed, I sometimes think he has forgotten me already! — during this last year almost ceasing to visit my couch! Still, it will be better all the same to have Charles at my side — such a weak little person as I am! Don't imagine for one moment, dear, I accuse my poor Stephen of fickleness; it's just that I know he'll regard it as a happy release . . ."

Fanny therefore practised her powers only when the men were abroad; retreating, at their return, from the ironing-board in the kitchen to the parlor-couch; and only occasionally, to demonstrate the improvement on which Charlotte based her great plan, making a sort of official appearance on the landing.

THE first time my Uncle Stephen saw her there I happened to be present; and as he slowly, almost timidly, mounted towards her—Fanny at last on her feet again, though at this moment a little drooping — I felt the pain already on us. My Uncle Stephen's face was so set in lines of patience, he could hardly achieve a smile; but his patient voice lifted.

"Be 'ee truly better, Fanny, my dear?" said he. "Be 'ee truly on the way to recovery?"

"Who knows?" she murmured. "Oh, Stephen, who can tell? Pray, pray don't build your hopes!"

"I was never a chap hopeful beyond measure," said he. "But if this London doctor be all Charlotte hears of he, and seeing 'ee already so strengthened of your own nature, give I leave to hope proportionately. Take every care upon the journey, my dear, and confide all troublesomeness to Charlotte."

I learnt, long afterwards, that he sought out Charlotte that same night and pressed upon her his personal fortune of twenty pounds as fee and journey money. Charlotte took it. Money was short all round just then at the farm.

My other uncles, as usual, afforded us no clue to their sentiments. Tobias, upon the prospect of his wife's absence for a period of several days, became silent absolutely. But at least no obstacle was placed in our travellers' path: the baking and dressmaking proceeded in full vigor. I drew several maps, the last shaded, indicating the locality of Brocket Place, five days passed and all was ready.

My Uncle Stephen drove them to the station in our trap. My Aunts Grace and Rachel, and, of course, myself, trooped out to see Charlotte and Fanny climb up. I remember, crossing the bitterness of being left behind, a sensation of extreme pride in my Aunt Charlotte's splendid, hussar-like appearance. The flowers in her bonnet garlanded her like a victorious warrior; stacked about with baskets of food, as it might have been with spoils of war, she sat perfectly erect, perfectly composed, perfectly (to all outward seeming) confident.

Beside her, Fanny Davis huddled in her shawl, all features extinguished under the limp, drooping brim of her black straw hat. I, and I think I only, caught her glance as the vehicle was set in motion: from under that limp, black brim she shot me a look as full of triumph as of malice.

We who were left behind could now do no more than wait.

While we waited, an odd thing happened. There sprung up at the farm a spirit of gaiety. All our official looks were sober; we never ceased, at least to begin with, to cast most anxious thoughts after Charlotte; thrusting up from which, as snowdrops from hardest winter soil, gaiety none the less peered.

My Aunts Grace and Rachel, passing each other in hall or passageway, exchanged involuntary smiles. Their new-old shouting matches grew gradually hilarious.

Rachel, with no need to bake at all, frivolously made dough to cut me a family of cat and kittens; Grace, from the breastbone of a goose, made me a jumping frog. Also, of course, they turned out the parlor.

I find it hard to discover a comparison for the zeal with which my aunts set about this work. (Or perhaps the mother of a child stolen by gipsies, her offspring regained, might so set about cleansing its body, burning its rags, clothing it afresh!)

Every single portable object was carried out on the landing, and thence, as space became congested, into Fanny's bedroom. The vacant floor was then swept, then polished; the Turkey carpet, hung over a line in the court, beaten into insensibility.

We washed each lustre separately. We rubbed the fire-irons till they shone like gold. Grace took the cabinet doors off their hinges, the better to scour their panes. Every item of Rachel's lustre-ware was washed in soap shavings and warm water before being set back in place.

I won delighted praise for my notion of restringing the harp, to make it look more seemly, with lengths of discarded fishing twine. Fanny's sofa was beaten and polished. The needlework chair was brushed with two sets of clean brushes—one hard, one soft.

When all was finished and set back in place, my aunts decided that the carpet should have been washed; so took it up again, and while they were about it gave the floor a second beeswaxing, out of sheer lightheartedness.

Even among the men I recall, if not gaiety, at least a certain relaxation. Our mealtimes were no less silent, but an overflow of cake and pastry loaded the table, and my uncles were cheered by nothing so much as food. They ate even more than usual, it may be their contentment had no other spring; but for whatever reason, whether from appetites ideally satisfied or because they, too, felt Fanny's absence a relief, the clouds about their heads perceptibly lifted.

The reason for Stephen's lightening of spirit, of course, needed no conjecture, and shadowed my days.

I felt he should be prepared.

This notion, carried from my Aunt Grace scouring the china cabinet to my Aunt Rachel washing lustre-ware, received small encouragement. Since all things must take their course, said Grace, and Rachel echoed her, no use to meet trouble half-way — a retreat from reality which shocked me deeply. I forgot that no Sylvester could do two things at once; they couldn't think about Stephen,

To page 48

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Continuing . . The Gipsy in the Parlor

from page 46

...nds were fixed ...or. They said ...d bade all keep ...persisted that Char... said nothing against ...s being prepared, only ... his being told, they ... I think, even hear me. ...refore loitered down to the ...ays on a private mission.

My Uncle Stephen was still far easier to draw into conversation than Tobias: to my opening remark, that I hoped Charlotte and Fanny got to London safely, replied after only a moment or two most like they had.

(I should say that I alone during these few momentous days watched for a letter. No Sylvester did. I had begged Charlotte to write or even telegraph to us; she nodded the proposal aside as a childish fancy. Even shyer of a pen than most Sylvesters—shy as of some black art—she had neither written to Charlie to meet her nor allowed me to do so on her behalf. I still hoped for a line from Fanny which didn't come.)

"How did they look, Uncle Stephen?" I asked cautiously. "How did Aunt Charlotte and Fanny seem when they got to the station?"

He considered. "Charlotte," said my Uncle Stephen, "commanded a chap to bear in their belongings just as 'twere her natural right . . . As to Fanny, her appeared most amazingly upheld. Also hopeful," added my Uncle Stephen, after a moment's further research. "In fact, I b'aint able to remember she, my little dear, so uplifted, and so hopeful-seeming since our first Plymouth meeting."

I was twelve, he nearing forty. I trembled for him. I said impetuously, "Uncle Stephen, if you don't marry Fanny ever, will it wreck your life?"

"B'aint us all as grass?" said he gravely. "As weeds to be cut down and put in the Lord's oven? Do Fanny grow brave enough to wed, most gladly will I wed she; do her still decline, b'aint I in the happy situation to offer she for ever a kindly home? Where be the wreckage of my life in that?"

He spoke poetry; he spoke like the Bible; I none the less felt slightly impatient with him. I wished him more, at that moment, the legendary black Sylvester male. I didn't put my last question—what if Fanny recovered, married anyone else?

"Uncle Stephen," I said, "if Fanny gets better, do you mind what she does at all?"

"Not so be it suits she," said my Uncle Stephen gently.

At least I had prepared him. If the hope that sprung up in my mind, actually during our conversation — the hope that Stephen might by some violent act of will prevent Fanny and Charles from marrying—if this hope was dashed as soon as formed, at least I had prepared him.

It seemed unlikely that he would be forced to leave home. But when I said something of the sort to my Aunt Grace, she absently retorted—and only absence could have made her speak so to me—that 'twould be a very different case altogether did Stephen ever see Charles and Fanny wedded. I could only hope her mistaken.

Two days passed. Three days passed: my Aunt Rachel at least began to wonder had our travellers borne sufficient provision. I, confident in the hospitality of Jackson's Economical Saloon, grimly suggested the greater danger of their being run over by omnibuses. Both my aunts regarded this as a joke.

Their laughter rang out continuously as of old, as in the days when I first knew them: each hour of this period carrying so great a respite. Their spirits soared. The parlor, reaching its former pitch of perfection, made for their increasing joy. My uncles, stuffed with rich food, yawned contentedly. Lulled in sunny doldrums, thoughtlessly the Sylvesters took their ease . . .

I was almost lulled into ease myself when, on the fourth day, Miss Jones called.

It wasn't her usual day. She called, as a regular thing, with Mrs. Brewer, because Mrs. Brewer had a pony-cart, on Tuesdays and Thursdays. It may be remembered that it was on a Thursday that I cured Fanny Davis; she and Charlotte left for London the Tuesday following, in which bustle we quite failed to notice the non-appearance of Jones and Brewer. They were sulking because Fanny put them off the Thursday before. (What they missed! For months all Frampton exclaimed it — what they missed!)

By the next Thursday, their next regular calling day, all Frampton knew Fanny and Charlotte set out for London: my Aunt Charlotte's appearance on Exeter station having been relayed back to a Frampton-dwelling cousin by the porter she so majestically commanded there. The presence of Fanny, to him but incidental, naturally whetted local inquisitiveness extremely.

Miss Jones and Mrs. Brewer refrained from calling on that day, either. But by the Friday Miss Jones' curiosity got the better of her; and, feigning complete ignorance, and a cold in the head to excuse Thursday, on Friday up she drove, lifted by Mr. Simnel, the chemist, Taunton-bound.

I WAS pleased to hear my Aunt Grace dismiss her instantaneously. After, in the fewest possible words, supplying the least possible information, my Aunt Grace strongly advised Miss Jones to stay by the gate and get a lift back. The Frampton butcher, said my Aunt Grace, should drive past in no more than ten-twenty minutes; and if Miss Jones overlooked a carcase or two from Beer's, there'd easily be room for she.

Miss Jones was left at the gate, Grace returned within doors, myself at her heels. Unluckily, Miss Jones had seen me; and, calling out, wouldn't Fanny's little friend bear her company, put me in the helpless position of an elder-summoned child. I halted instinctively; my Aunt Grace, sailing on, left me defenceless. When an elder calls, a child's feet instinctively obey. I turned back to the gate —with what I hoped was a rather cool, ironic look. I none the less turned back.

I was at this time learning things I didn't want to know.

"So Fanny and Mrs. Toby are gone to London?" said Miss Jones sharply, fixing me with her sharp, blackberry eye. "That's a new departure! Dear me, have I made a pun?"

I elaborately refrained from smiling. I said sulkily, yes, Fanny and my Aunt Charlotte were in Town.

"Not, I hope, to consult lawyers?" said she swiftly. "Such ingratitude it would be to Mr. Pascoe! Have they, do you think?"

This speech simply baffled me. I knew who Mr. Pascoe was, of course; he was the Frampton attorney my uncles threw out when he approached them after old Mr. Sylvester's death; but why he should be owed gratitude, or what place he could have in our affairs at all, was beyond my comprehension.

Miss Jones — and memory dimly recalls some rumor of some attachment, some projected Pascoe-Jones alliance—looked at me impatiently.

"Don't answer if you don't want to," said she. "Such a cross little thing as you are! Though I may tell you I know all about Fanny and Mr. Charles, too; and have done these eighteen months; and have a pretty shrewd idea why she and Mrs. Toby have gone to London. There I think Fanny quite right; it certainly isn't a wedding for Frampton St. Paul's! But I trust she doesn't set off among the lawyers; and when you write to her, if you won't give me her address, you might just remind our dear Fanny that in anything regarding custom, a local man is always best."

I should have done better to continue silent. I felt knowledge I didn't want, knowledge I would be happier without, dangerously close. (Not of Miss Jones' complicity; that I had guessed long since, ever since I realised her postmistress between Fanny and Charles.) Unluckily, the desire to score off her was too strong to be resisted.

"Customs are something you go through when you come back from France," I said smartly. "I don't see that has anything to do with Fanny or Aunt Charlotte."

Miss Jones laughed.

"Indeed no, dear child," rippled—a trifle shrilly—Miss Jones. "I speak of another kind of custom altogether. Entail-by-custom, in fact; which if Charles don't establish he may find himself fixed here as hind for ever and a day! They won't be able to sell, my dear, when Tobias pops off; and how will Fanny like that? No London lawyer can possibly handle it; only a person like Mr. Pascoe, who's seen Sylvesters inherit eldest after eldest just like peers of the realm, has any possible chance of establishing Charles' claim. Write that to Fanny Davis, my dear, and I'm sure she'll thank you!"

I stood dumb. Enlightenment —light complex, broken and refracted, like the light struck from our parlor prisms—enlightenment, however broken, struck me. Half a dozen scraps of Fanny's talk dropped together and made sense. I saw how Charles, pleading entail-by-custom, might hope to take the farm absolutely.

Only hope to: lawyer's child that I was, used all my life to overhearing legal gossip, legal comment, I instantly and precociously perceived a case of entail-by-custom, dragging on perhaps for years, a very pretty thing for Mr. Pascoe. It might well ruin the farm, did the Sylvesters contest; it would be a very pretty thing for a local man . . .

What dismayed me far more than even this possibility was the revelation of such new treachery as no Sylvester yet dreamed of. Fanny and Charles designed to sell the land. This thought formulated, I found my tongue.

"But Charlie won't sell!" I cried. "He won't want to! I

To page 53

IN AND OUT OF SOCIETY — BY RUD

Stay blonde with STÄ-BLOND

the Shampoo — enriched with lanolin — made to brighten fair hair *without bleaching!*

Created by New York Hair Specialist

Virginia Roberts

NEW STÄ-BLOND Liquid Shampoo

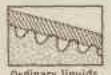
No more "hang-on" coughs in my family...

THIS NEW VICK DISCOVERY STOPS COUGHS 2 WAYS FASTER!

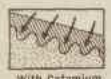
Even stubborn coughs clear up fast, when you use Vicks Cough Syrup. Why? CETAMIUM . . . Vicks new penetrating agent . . . is the secret! It carries extra relief to cough-tortured throat tissues that ordinary liquids —even water—cannot reach. At the same time, deep-down in the chest and bronchial system, Vicks Cough Syrup helps nature to break up congestion, loosen cough-causing phlegm—and break up stubborn coughs *fast!*

CETAMIUM makes the difference . . . only VICKS has it!

1. IN THE THROAT . . . it penetrates, to relieve cough areas you couldn't even reach before.



Ordinary liquids float right over throat surfaces



With Cetamium . . . Vicks Cough Syrup penetrates

These are enlarged drawings of what the inside of your throat looks like. Note the folds and crevices . . . perfect hiding places for cough and cold germs! Ordinary liquids can't get into these tiny openings. They merely flow over the surface of your throat.

But, with Cetamium, Vicks Cough Syrup *penetrates*. Its soothing, healing medication gets right down into these hard-to-reach and cough-tortured membranes. No wonder you feel such swift, wonderful comfort!

2. IN THE CHEST . . . works deep, to relieve congestion and break up bronchial coughs.

Deep Chest Action works to break up congestion

And, besides, Vicks Cough Syrup works deep down—warming and soothing your chest and bronchial system. Even stubborn coughs go in a hurry because Vicks Cough Syrup gets right to the roots of your cough. There, its special medications reduce congestion, loosen phlegm and break up deep bronchial coughs that otherwise hang on so long. Try it!

VICKS CETAMIUM COUGH SYRUP

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A comic Holliday

Film Fan-Fare

CONDUCTED BY M. J. McMAHON

● *Everything that is zany happens to Judy Holliday as the fame-happy model of Columbia's comedy, "It Should Happen to You." Judy plays the role of Gladys Glover, a dizzy, out-of-work New Yorker who wants — and gets — fame, fortune, and a "feller" through a ludicrous chain of events involving Peter Lawford and Jack Lemmon.*

TOP LEFT: Peter Lawford, a wealthy wolf, is one of Judy's "fellers." ABOVE LEFT: Judy in a huff with her "steady," newcomer Jack Lemmon. RIGHT: Modelling session in which she portrays the "unusual average American girl" leaves Judy exhausted.

FAME . . . Mocking fame, Judy wisecracks that she wants "Nothing sensational—just everybody should know me." Michael O'Shea ensures that they do.

FUN . . . According to this candid and comical Hollidayism: "Some girls will do anything to make a name for themselves . . . well, almost anything."

FORTUNE . . . "I don't want a million—a half is enough," says shrewd dim-wit Judy, who believes that advertising pays, especially if you're a jobless model.

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NEW ANTI-ENZYME IPANA

leads fight against Tooth Decay!

HOW ENZYMES CAUSE DECAY (and bad breath, too)

Dental scientists know that the bacteria present in everyone's mouth use *enzymes* to turn food particles into harmful acids. These acids in turn attack the teeth, causing decay. This bacterial-enzyme action is also responsible for a great deal of mouth odour.

HOW NEW IPANA COMBATS BACTERIAL-ENZYMES

New Ipana contains a special cleaning and foaming agent which actually *neutralises* these harmful enzymes. Every time you brush your teeth, *new* Ipana effectively fights tooth decay, and stops most unpleasant mouth odour for as long as nine hours. Incidentally, your dentist would advise you to use Ipana regularly *after* meals—that's the surest way to get effective dental protection.

When you use *new* Ipana you'll notice it's *twice* as foamy, cleans *twice* as well. That, also, is thanks to Ipana's new anti-enzyme foaming agent.

ALL IPANA IS NOW **ANTI-ENZYME**
NEW **CLEANING POWER** FOR WHITER, BRIGHTER TEETH!
NEW IPANA IS **FOAMIER!**
MINTIER FLAVOUR!
SAME FAMILIAR PACK!
NO INCREASE IN PRICE!
SOLD ONLY BY **CHEMISTS**

NEW IPANA IS A PRODUCT OF THE LABORATORIES OF BRISTOL-MYERS

Talking of Films

By M. J. McMAHON

★★ *Little Boy Lost*

BING CROSBY'S new film, "Little Boy Lost" (Paramount), is a tear-jerking excursion into the field of wistful sentiment with some songs.

It tells the story of a father's search for a son he has not seen since babyhood. When he discovers an orphan boy who might be his child, he then tackles the heart-breaking job of establishing proof of the boy's parenthood.

If you are normally touched by revelations of this sort, be prepared to shed some tears or at least struggle with a lump in the throat during this picture.

Though his fans may prefer to see him in more jovial mood, Crosby does manage to invest the role of bereaved husband and hopeful father with enough emotional conflict to make it acceptable.

The plight of the little boy, who is lost during World War II, is made moving by the clever acting of Christian Fourcade, a Frenchman of nine years or so.

The very look of the child is enough to rouse sympathy, for he is skinny, mournful-eyed, and so lacking in youthful spirit that it hurts.

In early film sequences the audience learns why American newspaperman Crosby happens to be searching the countryside of France for his son.

These introduce a pretty girl named Nicole Maurey as Bing's film wife. She is shot for Resistance activities during the German occupation of Paris.

"Little Boy Lost" was filmed in France for the wide screen and utilises the adroit talents of some local actors including Claude Dauphin (who assists in the search), Gabrielle Dorziat (as the Mother Superior of an orphanage), and Georgette Anys, who contributes superior acting as a buxom laundress.

In Sydney—Prince Edward.

CITY FILM GUIDE

Films reviewed

CENTURY.—★★ "The Moon is Blue," comedy, starring David Niven, William Holden, Maggie McNamara. Plus featurettes.

EMBASSY.—★★ "The Captain's Paradise," comedy, starring Alec Guinness, Yvonne de Carlo, Celia Johnson. Plus featurettes.

LIBERTY.—★★ "All the Brothers Were Valiant," technicolor period adventure, starring Robert Taylor, Ann Blyth, Stewart Granger. Plus featurettes.

LYCEUM.—★★ "The Love Lottery," technicolor comedy, starring David Niven, Peggy Cummins, Anne Vernon. Plus "Royal New Zealand Journey," color feature.

LYRIC.—★★ "Green Dolphin Street," adventure drama, starring Lana Turner, Van Heflin. Plus ★ "Apache Warsmoke," Western, starring Gilbert Roland. (Both re-releases.)

MAYFAIR.—★ "Second Chance," technicolor suspense drama, starring Robert Mitchum, Linda Darnell, Jack Palance. Plus ★ "Marry Me Again," comedy, starring Robert Cummings, Marie Wilson.

PALACE.—★ "The Blue Gardenia," mystery, starring Anne Baxter, Richard Conte, Ann Sothern. Plus 'Honey Chile," comedy, starring Judy Canova, Eddie Foy, jun.

PLAZA.—★★ "How to Marry a Millionaire," technicolor CinemaScope comedy, starring Marilyn Monroe, Betty Grable, Lauren Bacall, Cameron Mitchell. Plus "Coronation Parade," CinemaScope technicolor feature.

PRINCE EDWARD.—★★ "Little Boy Lost," drama, starring Bing Crosby, Claude Dauphin. (See review this page.) Plus featurettes.

REGENT.—★★ "The Robe," technicolor CinemaScope biblical drama, starring Richard Burton, Jean Simmons, Victor Mature. Plus featurettes.

SAVOY.—★★★ "One Summer of Happiness," Swedish-language drama, starring Ulla Jacobsson, Folke Sundquist. Plus ★★ "Ukrainian Concert Hall," color music feature.

STATE.—★★★ "Roman Holiday," romantic comedy, starring Gregory Peck, Audrey Hepburn. Plus featurettes.

ST. JAMES.—★★ "Executive Suite," drama, starring William Holden, Paul Douglas, June Allyson, and an all-star cast. Plus featurettes.

VICTORY.—★ "It Came From Outer Space," science fiction drama, starring Richard Carlson, Barbara Rush, Charles Drake. Plus ★ "Yankee Buccaneer," technicolor sea adventure, starring Jeff Chandler, Suzan Ball.

Films not yet reviewed

CAPITOL.—"Is Your Honeymoon Really Necessary?" comedy, starring David Tomlinson, Bonar Colleano, Diana Dors. Plus "Escape Route," thriller, starring George Raft, Sally Gray.

ESQUIRE.—"The Highwayman," cinecolor period adventure, starring Philip Friend, Wanda Hendrix, Charles Coburn. Plus "Siren of Atlantis," adventure, starring Maria Montez, Jean-Pierre Aumont. (Re-release.)

PARK.—"Champ for a Day," boxing drama, starring Alex Nicol, Audrey Totter. Plus ★ "Smart Woman," drama, starring Brian Aherne, Constance Bennett. '(Re-release.)

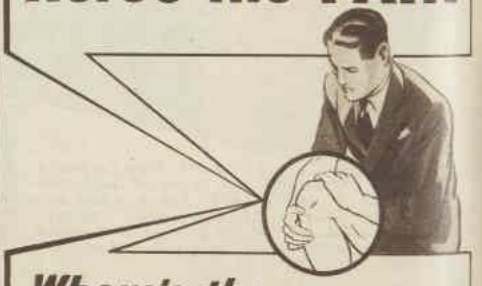
VARIETY.—"Vienna Waltzes," musical, starring Anton Walbrook, Marte Harell. Plus "A Day in the Country," featurette.

When a young man flies

With TAA he's among friends all the way! They see him safely aboard the plane and make his flight a real delight. He enjoys "friendly way" comfort, a cheery word from the Captain and a chat with the hostess who serves him delicious meals. Flying alone gives him confidence in himself . . . confidence in TAA.

"Fly **TAA** -the friendly way"

Here's the PAIN



Where's the
SLOAN'S

You feel distinct comfort immediately you dab on a little Sloan's Liniment. Then, in only a few minutes, the warming, EXTRA blood flow induced gives you soothing relief from pain. The warming tingle of Sloan's works its way to the source of the pain and stops it. Even severe muscular pains and joint aches respond to the soothing warmth of Sloan's. For quick relief of backache, stiffness, neuritis, rheumatic pains, lumbago, strains and sprains, rely on Sloan's.

2'9 BOTTLE

SLOAN'S LINIMENT
AT ALL CHEMISTS

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1. *INTRUDER Ginger Edwards (Michael Medwin) finds he has broken into home of his wartime commander, Wolf Merton (Jack Hawkins). Merton tries to help him.*

2. *FRIGHTENED by the door-bell, Ginger thinks Merton has betrayed him to the police and makes a hurried getaway. Merton determines to find him and help in his rehabilitation.*

3. *INQUIRIES made through Ginger's army friend Pirry (Dennis Price) reveal nothing. Not interested, Pirry later puts the police on Merton's trail for aiding and abetting a criminal.*

Suspense drama

★ "The Intruder" (British Lion) is a suspense drama which stars Jack Hawkins as Wolf Merton, an ex-Tank Corps colonel, whose home is burgled by a former trooper.

Based on Robin Maugham's novel "Line on Ginger," it shows how Merton sets out to discover why a good soldier should become a law-breaking civilian. Young British star Michael Medwin plays the role of Ginger.

One of the highlights of the drama is the exciting surprise climax in which Ginger's problems are resolved.

Also appearing in the film are screen favorites George Cole, Dennis Price, Dora Bryan, and Nicholas Phipps.

4. *DISCOVERING Ginger hiding in a hayloft, Merton learns that he is an escaped convict driven by circumstances to his present criminal life. Ginger tells his unhappy story.*

5. *RETURNING from the war, Ginger faced a bitter disappointment when his girl (Susan Shaw) fell in love with a war-shy spiv (Harold Lang) and refused to see him again.*

6. *MANSLAUGHTER charge followed an attack on an uncle who had mistreated Ginger's orphaned younger brother during his absence at the war. Ginger later escaped from prison.*

7. *TRAPPED by police, who tail Merton after Pirry's tip-off, Merton, risking prosecuton, promises to help Ginger if he can. Together they try to slip past police cordon of the area.*

8. *REALISATION that if he is to rehabilitate himself he must finish his prison sentence persuades Ginger to surrender. Ginger promises he will enter by the front door next time.*

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New, improved, pressure-pleated Skirt . . . guaranteeing pleat retention! With tailored match-mate.

Sportscraft 1903 1954

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Potter-Moore HAIR TONIC

containing 'Cholesterol' tonic ingredient, prevents dandruff, promotes lustrous growth.

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The New "CASHMERE-FINISH"

Eagley NEVASHRINK

GUARANTEED UNSHRINKABLE

A completely new process, available only in Eagley, gives a warmer, softer "cashmere-finish" to your underwear. And the result is an exciting new quality in all-wool underwear fabric—at NO GREATER COST!

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IN ALL STYLES FOR MEN, WOMEN AND CHILDREN

It's softer!... it's warmer!... it wears longer!

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EN54/1 FPC

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think you'd better tell Mr. Parlor that!"

Miss Jones laughed again.

"And I believed you in Fanny's confidence!" said she. "Why, it was all agreed between them upon their very engagement! But never mind, my dear; we shall all meet yet at their Plymouth villa. Do I see my horrid chariot approach?"

Mr. Granville, the butcher, halted at her gesticulations, and took her up, and they drove off towards Frampton. I went back into the house to my Aunt Grace and said baldly, "Aunt Grace, suppose Fanny makes Charles sell the farm?"

It was like asking suppose the skies fall? My question made no more and no less impression. My Aunt Grace took me by the shoulders, turned my face to the window, and called to Rachel to put hot bricks in my bed.

"'Tis but a chill 'ee've taken," said my Aunt Grace, reassuringly. "Twelve hours' sleep, and 'ee'll be brave as ever!"

I reiterated a desperate, probably incoherent, warning.

"Us have allowed 'ee to fret beyond measure," said Rachel anxiously. "Bide still, my lamb, till I bring 'ee a cup of hot milk . . ."

Between warmed sheets, fed hot milk, and bread and honey, I couldn't but take a little comfort before I slept; but slept only to wake again long before midnight struck.

Such wakings belong to childhood: because their character is universal—the strangeness of a room unlit, all other rooms of a house still bright, the sense of adult life still active, even the world without still about its business—I lay a moment or two back in London, where I waked so not uncommonly.

Continuing . . The Gipsy in the Parlor

from page 48

Dim window-shapes, dim shapes of furniture, told me where I was; recollection rushed in upon me, and I remembered danger, and my Aunt Charlotte absent; and myself of all Sylvester kin the only one on guard . . .

From no sensible motive, I slipped from my bed to the window. I had forgotten—half-asleep—that it no longer looked out upon the crab-tree court. Only small, nondescript roofings met my eye. But it was again a very hot, still night. The wood of the window-seat again warmed my knees, as the wood of the sill warmed my elbows. I was in the attitude for prayer; I prayed.

I prayed no prayer that had been taught me. Church twice on Sunday furnished no suitable form. We had prayers at school each morning, rather beautifully spoken by our headmistress, from which I personally derived an emotion rather aesthetic than religious. I now petitioned my Maker crudely as a missionary's first convert, baldly as an archbishop in time of war. I prayed help us, defeat them; and in return I will be good.

Then I went back to bed; and the next day Charlotte came home.

. . . .

What transpired in London during those five days I learned essentially from two sources: Clara Blow and my father. My Aunt Charlotte wasn't uncommunicative by intent: she was simply incapable of detailed, coherent narrating; all we were to learn from Charlotte came out piecemeal, over a period, literally, of years. Moreover, she couldn't possibly, because she had no idea of it, give us any proper account of her own personal impact upon Jackson's Economical Saloon.

I wish I had seen my Aunt Charlotte in London. She must have cut through our streets like a ship in full sail. Even Clara Blow could scarcely do her justice—as Clara was first to admit.

"If you'd been there when she sailed in!" Clara said repeatedly. "I mean, Charlie we'd sort of got used to, after all he's a man, but when your Auntie sailed in, dear, my word, didn't Jackson's look small!"

I prefer to go back a little further: to the descent of Fanny and my Aunt Charlotte upon the Flower in Hand. Here Charlotte, with her Norfolk connections, was immediately recognised as a guest not to be trifled with; and one very old waiter, who remembered her father, was more or less detailed to her service.

My Aunt Charlotte looked him over, put a searching question or two, and handed over the egg-basket. All other fare, said she, they'd eat cold; but he might make them tea as required, the caddy to be returned at their departure. (She left the half-dozen eggs as a vail, also the heel of a pasty.)

I imagine Fanny impressed at once by this display of authority. I imagine her no less impressed, for all her Plymouth sophistication, when Charlotte, their baggage deposited and their subsistence assured, commanded a cab to bear them to Brocket Place.

This was on the day of their arrival. They reached Jackson's Economical Saloon at a rather good moment—tables set, all culinary preparations under way, the evening mob not yet in evidence. I suppose Jackson's looked as well as ever it could; and Clara Blow had just done her hair.

You could have knocked her down with a feather; chiefly, she subsequently assured me, from the shock of recognition.

"'Cause I recognised her, naturally, straight off," said Clara Blow. "I mean, there can't be many of 'em, can there? I mean, that size! I'm fairly whopping myself," said Clara Blow, "but I give you my word, dear, when your Auntie sailed in, I felt no bigger than a cat. There was two little fellows eating saveloys, and they looked like mice."

So my Aunt Charlotte's introduction of herself was superfluous — and of Fanny Davis scarcely less so. Clara took a dislike to Fanny at once. Addressing Charlotte, she said she was Miss Blow; and if Mrs. Sylvester wanted Charlie, he'd be down in two shakes. (There was never any mention, in all Clara's highly detailed narrative, of her having given Charlie a shout. I presumed her not unwilling to see him knocked down by a feather, too.) Charlotte and Fanny then accepted seats, and what immediately ensued was a contest in hospitality, country versus town.

My Aunt Charlotte had in a basket cheese, cold chicken, and fruit cake. Clara Blow had Jackson's. As Charlotte pressed chicken on Clara, Clara pressed sausage-rolls on Charlotte. It was a form of courtesy understood and appreciated by both, and smoothed over any slight awkwardness; indeed, food being to both a natural preoccupation, and with so many varieties of it at hand, they rapidly fell into a very enjoyable exchange.

It became technical: Clara Blow detailed Jackson's catering system, with a side glance at the bandit-like practices of London tradespeople, and Charlotte told how Sylvesters, but for salt and sugar, could live fatly off their own land. They interested each other; they stimulated each other. Ideas began to form—the idea, for example, of Jackson's serving chicken on Sundays, the fowls to be sent direct from Devon, thus cutting out the middleman.

"I do believe it might catch on," said Clara Blow, concentrating. "Let alone raising the tone, I do believe it might pay. I've a good mind to speak to Mr. Isaacs . . ."

I can well imagine how irritating this was to Fanny Davis. Too ladylike to eat, strung to a high pitch of emotional tension, she had to sit and listen to the best ways of packing poultry. Also, she was being ignored. I feel certain that my Aunt Charlotte was quite unsubtle in this, that she talked catering to Clara because catering interested her, not to irritate Fanny Davis; but the effect on Fanny must have been irritating none the less. As for Clara—

"Here, let's hear what you say!" shouted she to the saveloy eaters. "How'd you fancy a proper Sunday dinner—chicken and all trimmings, ninepence a plate?"—and when they doubtfully shook their heads, found time, even as Charlie's foot shook the stair, to shout back, "All right, then, a tanner; with bread."

And just as Clara and my Aunt Charlotte were shaking hands on the tentative agreement, Charlie came in.

You could have knocked him down with a feather. He admitted it himself, when Clara asked him afterwards. At the moment, however, he simply stood. They all stood, even the genuine customers, who rather hastily paid and left. ("As though they expected something

To page 54

★ As I read the stars ★ By EVE HILLIARD ★

ARIES (March 21- April 20): Any personal matter requiring adjustment should be undertaken on April 6 for a satisfactory solution. The afternoon and evening of April 8 tend to accidents.

TAURUS (April 21-May 20): Hugging a pleasant secret, or a little surpise, April 9? You can then let the cat out of the bag. April 11 is likely to prove disappointing socially.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21): Exciting news, April 7, may send you soaring into the clouds; don't forget you'll have to foot the bills, however. April 10 is fine for outings.

CANCER (June 22-July 22): Do you want to improve your position in the business or social world? Both April 7 and 12 will help you on your way. Walk softly, April 10.

LEO (July 23-August 22): Good news, April 6, may set you going flat out and cause you to stub your toe, April 9, when unexpected obstacles arise. April 12 sees you triumphant.

VIRGO (August 23-September 23): While April 8 is likely to be marked by the loss of a piece of personal property, April 10 is excellent for a mild gamble.

LIBRA (September 24-October 23): Entertainment, party-going, club and group activity flourish, particularly on the evening of April 9. Ease off, relax, April 11.

SCORPIO (October 24-November 22): Minor ailments are possible unless care is taken, April 6. April 8 and 12 are fine for employment or financial matters.

[The Australian Women's Weekly presents this astrological diary as a feature of interest only, without accepting any responsibility whatever for the statements contained in it.]

SAGITTARIUS (November 23-December 20): After prolonged thought you may come to a decision, April 8. This day is romantic for the young and profitable for their elders.

CAPRICORN (December 21-January 19): Those wishing to make purchases for their home should find what they seek, April 9. Spend April 11 quietly and avoid disappointments.

AQUARIUS (January 20-February 19): Appointments, interviews set for April 6 may take an unexpected twist. Outings, April 10, may prove unsatisfactory; or people may let you down.

PISCES (February 20-March 20): The morning of April 8 suits buying and selling or anything to do with the market place. April 10 is deceptive; avoid risks. April 12 tops.

MONEY-SAVING TREAT!

'Cream' fruit and cereals with double-rich Carnation

Pour Carnation Milk straight from the tin onto breakfast cereals, pies and fruits. You'll love the smooth creamy taste — and see what you save! It's so good for you, too. Carnation is pure, whole country milk condensed to double-richness. All the original cream is retained, as well as every health element that makes milk Nature's most valued food. For economy, for flavour, use Carnation Milk in all your cooking, too.

So Easy! Pour Carnation straight from the tin

With the tip of the can-opener, punch two holes in the top of your Carnation Milk tin — one on either side. You'll find Carnation Milk pours readily and easily this way — without waste.

Carnation MILK "from contented cows"

Look for it at your grocer's—in the tall red and white tins!

COOK'S CORNER

With double-rich Carnation Milk every dish gains creamy flavour and rich nourishment. Homogenised to distribute cream particles evenly, Carnation blends better, gives a much smoother texture. You'll see how when you make:—

SCRAMBLED EGGS à la Carnation

4 eggs; 3/4 teaspoon salt; 1/8 teaspoon pepper; 1 Cup Carnation Milk, undiluted; 1 level tablespoon butter.

Beat eggs; add salt, pepper and Carnation Milk. Melt butter in saucepan; add eggs and milk. Cook very slowly, stirring constantly, until firm but not hard. Serves 4.

CREAM OF SALMON

1 tablespoon butter; 1 tablespoon flour; 1/4 teaspoon salt; 1/2 cup Carnation Milk, diluted with 1/2 cup water; 1 cup salmon or tuna.

Melt butter in saucepan over medium heat. Stir in flour and salt; cook 1 minute. Remove from heat and add 1/4 cup diluted Carnation Milk; blend carefully until smooth. Add remaining Carnation Milk and return to heat, stirring constantly until sauce thickens. Add flaked fish; allow to heat through.

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Continuing . . **The Gipsy in the Parlor**

from page 53

to happen, dear," reported Clara Blow. "Though what I'm sure I can't say. There was nothing like a row.")

What did happen was that Charlotte walked up to her son, took a good, close look at him, and kissed him, as she did so rarely, only when he left home or returned to it, once on the cheek. Neither of them spoke; but their bearing made on Clara at least a very strong impression. She said she half-expected to see them turn about and walk off together, as though there was no one else in the saloon. And so I, too, think they might have done—but for Fanny Davis.

At last seizing her cue, Fanny flung herself forward upon Charlie's neck, and hung there like a bat, and burst into a flood of happy tears. Clara Blow instantly plucked her away and dropped her back upon a chair. There, Fanny's happy tears turned to hysteria. Clara, no doubt swearing like a trooper, dashed a glassful of water over her, then from an ingrained habit of cleaning up rubbed her dry with a napkin. When all this was over Charlie and my Aunt Charlotte still hadn't stirred.

"Charlie bor," said my Aunt Charlotte moderately, "it seems 'ee be a bone of contention."

She had to speak rather loudly, to top Fanny's sobs; but as she turned inquiringly to Clara, these rapidly diminished. Fanny Davis, too, turned to Clara Blow; who was fortunately able to repeat to me her very words. I didn't wonder she remembered them, for they were notable.

"Mrs. Sylvester, I wouldn't take him as a gift," said Clara Blow. "I am a person never wanted bread yet, nor ever will. I make no claim upon him whatsoever; if he has accepted my hospitality, he's earned, with a bit of pushing, his keep. Far be it from me to offend a lady I both esteem and admire, and I hope we may still have a mutual business connection in the future; but I wouldn't take Charlie as a gift."

So spoke, or said she spoke, Clara Blow. (Doubtless she polished it up a bit afterwards. I have equally no doubt that she gave me a generally accurate outline.)

"That be plain talk at least," said my Aunt Charlotte approvingly, "and seems the field be left clear for Fanny Davis. ("Who'm miraculously recovered," threw in Charlotte superfluously.) Well, Charlie bor?"

What Charles would have answered was never known. Fanny Davis being now in full voice again.

"Field left clear, indeed," cried she. "Oh, what hypocrites am I fallen among. Are not Charles and I engaged? Haven't we been engaged these two years? Haven't we but waited till I regained my strength to marry? Charles, my love, tell your mother the truth! Admit your debts, which we have come to pay! Let Miss Blow list every last item—since for all her fine talk don't we know how she holds you? For heaven's sake, my love, speak!"

I don't know if Clara generously polished up this speech, too, I can say only that it sounds exactly like Fanny Davis. And I think Charles really must have spoken at last. Almost incredibly, my Cousin Charles hadn't yet uttered a single word; but I think he must have spoken then—only Taffy Griffiths saved him.

"Which was really a riot, dear," said Clara Blow. "Not that I refer to any roughness—far from it! I mean just the way your Auntie handled matters. Six-to-seven-to-eight Jackson's commonly quiet as a graveyard, chaps never as a rule turning up much before nine; only it just so happened—as it would so happen—Taffy Griffiths brought some friends in for a sausage-and-mash before the fight. I think it was the welterweight. And being mostly Welsh, dear, they do incline to sing a bit; which, I must say, their voices being almost professional, I've always looked on it as rather an attraction. It was the words, dear," said Clara frankly, "upset your Auntie. So she told them to clear out."

"Did they?" asked I, enthralled.

"That's the funny part," said Clara Blow. "They did. Without Charlie raising a finger, what's more. Of course they saw him ready, but really he wasn't needed. Your Auntie just gave 'em a proper tongue-lashing, and out they skedaddled—five bob lost to the till, but I still say well worth it . . ."

And when Taffy Griffiths and his friends had vanished, so had my Cousin Charles. With them, in fact. Under cover of the riot, mingling with Taffy's friends, my Cousin Charles simply walked out.

"Clara!" I protested. "Oh, Clara, how could he?"

"Well, dear, he never did like an upset," said Clara tolerantly. "That's what made him such a splendid chucker-out."

So my Cousin Charles walked quietly out; and the three women left behind, their bone of contention no less than the arbiter of their fates withdrawn, faced something of an anti-climax. (The shepherd Paris on Mount Ida might equally have discountenaced three goddesses.) Fanny Davis was probably quite right to grow hysterical again, she could have done nothing more socially useful.

By common consent the whole debate was postponed; and Clara Blow went out and found another cab, and in it my Aunt Charlotte and Fanny Davis returned to the Flower in Hand.

I have omitted the fact that they there shared a room. Economy, prudence, convention—every possible consideration made it inevitable. But I have often wondered what sort of a night they spent, side by side in the same double bed.

My Aunt Charlotte at least slept sufficiently well to have energy next day for quite extensive sightseeing.

She visited the Tower of London, Madame Tussaud's Waxworks, St. Paul's Cathedral, and Westminster Abbey; and if such a programme in the circumstances smacks of frivolity, I can but repeat her subsequent explanation to my Aunts Grace and Rachel: she had never visited London before, and in all probability never would again. My Aunts Grace and Rachel accepted this unhesitatingly, and only marvelled how Charlotte got about.

She got about in omnibuses. She found their conductors very civil. She found the police very civil also. In fact, my Aunt Charlotte found all London very civil to her. I see the trail of staggered cockneys in her wake. She was such a great, good-humored, handsome whopper. Moreover, she had already complete faith in Clara Blow's ability to produce Charlie when and as required; and so, after a substantial breakfast off her own eggs and bacon, set out to see the sights.

Fanny Davis, on the other hand, relapsing into fragility, took breakfast in bed, and didn't set off on her own account until considerably later. Thus their paths for the major part of Wednesday diverged; and in any case I very much doubt whether Charlotte would have followed Fanny Davis'.

My Aunt Charlotte's big nature included several delicacies: I was domiciled at the farm summer after summer, but she never felt this gave her a claim to my parents' London hospitality, because I was paid for at some infinitesimal sum per week. Fanny Davis' object, that Wednesday, was to visit my father and cadge free legal advice.

Of this episode I heard far more than I wished as soon as I got home.

"If you have ever insinuated," said my father, "to any of your mother's down-at-heel Devonshire connections that I am open to a little pettifogging rural business—such as might arise, for example, over a parcel of disputed hencoops or some bucolic breach-of-promise—I shall be greatly obliged if you will disillusion them."

It was then I knew Fanny Davis had visited him. He couldn't possibly so refer to my Aunt Charlotte — and how strongly I wished it had been she, not Fanny, who bearded him! I felt even my father must have recognised Charlotte's quality. I was too much afraid of him to point out that Fanny Davis wasn't a Sylvester at all. I simply stammered I was sorry, I hadn't insinuated anything . . .

My father had none the less been subjected to persecution. I felt at the time, as I feel now, his language exaggerated. Fanny Davis merely caught him at lunch. By a piece of luck, she found him lunching at home. (He, in fact, quite often came home to lunch while my mother was away, to enjoy the emptiness of the house. There could have been no other reason, since all our cooks thought he did it to keep them up to the mark, and in revenge served specially unappetising food.)

Nor did Fanny actually interrupt his repast; our experienced parlormaid, Toptree, kept her waiting in the hall till he had finished, and announced her only with the coffee. (This again an act of revenge; one glance must have identified Fanny Davis, to any experienced eye, as a person one wasn't at home to. Toptree hadn't quite the audacity to interrupt the master's lunch, so compromised on annoying him at his coffee. Parlormaids also resent being kept up to the mark.)

To my father at his coffee, and at his first cigar of the day, Fanny Davis therefore entered, and instantly made on him the worst possible impression.

"I admit," said my father, with elaborate irony, "to a certain astonishment. Some moon-calf charged with poaching, even with manslaughter; some collapsed hayrick of a rustic matron, anxious for her young at the Assizes, either well-worn character, however hopelessly beyond my aid, would have surprised me less. Indeed, would have offended me less. A milliner involved in breach of promise I found offensive absolutely . . ."

How did he guess Fanny Davis a milliner? I didn't like to ask. And as I didn't think she'd told, I could only imagine Fanny Davis' millinerishness undisguisable as ineradicable. Leaving the point aside, I nervously inquired what my father had said.

"I instructed her, naturally, to go away," said he, "and take advice of some local man."

So my father and Miss Jones agreed. Miss Jones also was a milliner; I didn't think my father would be quite pleased to know of this second opinion, so to speak, so thoroughly in agreement with his own. At the time—for this particular conversation took place in the autumn, all the events of the summer behind me—I was chiefly concerned to re-establish Sylvester repute. It wasn't easy.

Toptree, who listened

To page 62

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Perfect for Easter

...or any old time at all!

INGREDIENTS

½ cup milk
1 teaspoon lemon juice
4 ozs. (½ pkt.) butter or margarine
7 ozs. (1½ cups tightly packed) brown sugar
1 teaspoon vanilla
2 eggs
8 ozs. (2 level cups) plain flour
3½ level teaspoons MUMS BAKING POWDER

Caramel NEST EGG CAKE

METHOD: Grease and flour two 7" tins; line bottom with paper. Add lemon juice to milk. Cream shortening, sugar, vanilla thoroughly together. Add eggs, beat hard for 3 minutes, or till light and fluffy. Sift flour and baking powder, add alternately with milk, beating smooth after each addition. Turn into prepared tins; bake 20-25 minutes in moderate oven. Allow stand 5 minutes in tins before turning out.

Electric Mixer Directions—Cream shortening and sugar on low speed, beat 2 minutes on medium speed after addition of eggs, then switch to lowest speed for addition of flour and milk.

Quick Lemon Filling—Stir together ½ cup sweetened condensed milk, 1 tablespoon lemon juice, ½ teaspoon grated lemon rind. Tint with 2-3 drops green food colouring.

Rich Caramel Frosting—Combine ½ level cup (firmly packed) brown sugar with ¼ level teaspoon cream of tartar and 1 level tablespoon butter. Stir over low heat until sugar dissolves—about 2 minutes. Remove from heat and stir in 2 tablespoons milk, 1½ cups icing sugar (free from lumps) and ½ teaspoon lemon juice. Use immediately.

Easter Decoration

Make a small quantity of rich chocolate icing and pipe a nest on top of the cake. Fill the nest with eggs — scorched almonds, or Paris almonds spotted with gay food colours. For a festive finishing touch arrange a border of scorched peanuts, like tiny chocolate eggs, right round your cake.

Mums
CREAM OF TARTAR
BAKING POWDER

- Baking with MUMS ensures a balanced recipe.
- MUMS with plain flour is economical: saves you real money! (Most overseas recipes use baking powder.)
- Cakes made with MUMS taste better, look better, keep better.
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Easy as Pie — with a novel, delicious filling!

Chocolate EASTER DAISY PIE

METHOD FOR PASTRY SHELL: Sift flour, baking powder. Have margarine at room temperature and drop into a mixing bowl. Beat in boiling water with a fork. Add flour all at once, mix lightly and turn out on well-floured board. Roll ¼" thick and line an ovenware pie plate, turning in overlap and fluting it between thumb and finger to form stand-up rim. Prick bottom with fork and stand weighted 6" cake tin in the pie to keep it in shape. Bake in a moderately hot oven till tinted. (When pastry has risen and begun to colour, remove cake tin and reduce heat.)

METHOD FOR FILLING: Add water to gelatine and set aside. Combine custard powder, cocoa and sugar in a saucepan. Moisten with a little of the milk and stir smooth. Add remaining milk and stir constantly over moderate heat until thick. Simmer several minutes, then remove from heat and add gelatine, stirring till dissolved. Add shortening and vanilla. Spread bottom of cooled baked shell with berry jam and pour in the cooled chocolate filling. Chill till firm, then decorate with blanched-almond daisies and, for special occasions, whipped cream, slightly sweetened and flavoured with vanilla.

INGREDIENTS

Stay-Crisp Pastry Shell
6 ozs. (1½ level cups) plain flour
1 level teaspoon MUMS BAKING POWDER
4 ozs. (½ pkt.) margarine
2 tablespoons boiling water

•

Special Chocolate Filling
1 level tablespoon gelatine
1 tablespoon water
2 level tablespoons MUMS CUSTARD POWDER
1½ level tablespoons cocoa
6 level tablespoons sugar
2 measuring cups milk
1 level tablespoon butter or margarine
½ teaspoon vanilla

ALTERNATIVE FILLING

Ingredients: 1 level tablespoon gelatine, 1 tablespoon water, 2 level tablespoons Mums Custard Powder, 4 level tablespoons sugar, 2 cups milk, 1 level tablespoon butter or margarine, ½ teaspoon vanilla, ½ cup desiccated coconut (toasted golden brown in slow oven).

Proceed as for chocolate filling above. When gelatine is dissolved, add shortening, vanilla and coconut. Spread cooled baked shell with jam, pour in *cooled* filling, chill until firm, top with toasted, shredded or desiccated coconut and—on special occasions — a ruffle of whipped cream.

Mums
CUSTARD POWDER

Mums delightful whipped cream smoothness and delicate, real vanilla flavour make it the tastiest custard of all. Served icy cold or steaming hot, it's always a real treat the whole year through. Mums saves money, too, because it needs no eggs and tastes just as delicious made with either fresh, powdered or condensed milk.

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How to hang pictures

PROBLEM SOLVED. This arrangement solves the problem of a mantelpiece too high in relation to the rest of the room. The picture is hung above eye-level, but flowers and sculpture lead the eye up to the picture and back again to the rest of the room. More detail is given in the article.

LARGE PICTURE which does not overcrowd a small room but adds a sense of space. The flowers, which should stand on a table or chest, repeat the colors in the picture.

Effective blend of varying designs

By DORA SWEETAPPLE, Director of the Design School at Woollahra, Sydney

At a recent "Festival of Talent" held in Sydney, the public had an opportunity of seeing pictures and sculpture in the domestic setting of an old home.

VISITORS to the exhibition saw how pictures and sculpture of widely different styles and subjects can be used side by side when their color and design have been considered in relation to their setting.

This "relationship" to the setting of a room is a point often ignored in hanging pictures, and, instead, fixed rules are applied, such as having all the tops of the frames or all the bases on the same level.

To show a picture to its best advantage the first thing to remember is that it should be hung low enough for the eyes of a person of average height to focus somewhere about its centre.

Next to be considered are the heights and positions of doors, windows, mantelpieces, or other architectural features in the room where the pictures are to be hung, also the heights of pieces of furniture in the room.

The eye glances unconsciously over these different levels in a room, "stepping" from one to another. The placing of a picture can make the "step" from the top of the door, for instance, to the top of the bookcase a comfortable or uncomfortable one.

When "comfortable" levels are found for the pictures, the whole room has a sense of unity, and the pictures themselves are seen at their best.

Although it is preferable to hang pictures low, sometimes a feature in a room, such as a high mantelpiece, makes it necessary to hang one above eye-level.

In these rooms, a piece of sculpture or flowers placed on the mantelpiece beneath the picture will lead the eye down again to a comfortable level.

The settings on this page illustrate some of the points I would like to emphasise:

A picture by Douglas Dundas over a high mantelpiece is shown (top left) with a piece of sculpture by Wendy Solling. The sculpture, a man fishing, is in green bronzed plaster, picking up the green of the hedge in the picture. Some dark red flowers in the vase pick up a browny-red note in the picture, and so contrast it with the rest of the room.

A religious picture by Justin O'Brien (top right) has been hung beside a narrow arched doorway, which echoes the ecclesiastical lines of the picture. The graceful lilies in the flower arrangement are also in keeping with the picture.

Jean Bellette's large still life (top centre), which would normally be considered a gallery picture only, and much too large for a flat, shows that it could, by its own depth, give a sense of additional space to a very small room.

The color of the flowers and green glass jug picked up the colors in the picture.

The subject in this picture made it ideal for a dining-room.

Shown lower left is Russell Drysdale's "Emus in Landscape," a painting in a pictorial style, beside a piece of abstract sculpture by Lyndon Dadswell. The strong black-and-white pattern of the sculpture repeats in a different idiom the black and white in the picture.

The austerity of the lacquered metal in the sculpture relates it to the barren landscape; and finally the surprise of seeing such different styles used so happily together gives each of them a fresh value.

A fresh and equally happy surprise would be to see them used in a room with at least some period furniture in it.

Another unexpected but wholly satisfactory use of abstract sculpture with a painting in a different style is seen over a mantelpiece (lower right) where a water-color by Thea Proctor is used with an abstract in welded iron by Lyndon Dadswell and a stylised figure in cement by Sheila MacDonald.

Because of the classic simplicity of the water-color, its strong tonal values, and structural design, it ties up perfectly with both pieces of sculpture.

NARROW WALL SPACE by an arched doorway in a hall. The impression of too many vertical lines was broken by the curve of the flowers cutting across the picture.

HALLWAY. The strong black-and-white pattern and the angles in both sculpture and painting relate the two, although one is abstract and the other pictorial in style.

MANTELPIECE. An interesting example of work in different styles and mediums used harmoniously together. They are united by common elements of design and color.

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Elizabethan sweater

Knit this flattering, figure-moulding sweater in your two favorite contrasting colors, and wear it with winter skirts on cold days.

THE front and back panels of the design are worked in a fine rib pattern in a contrasting color, with diagonal stripes in the main shade.

The simple rib design and the unusual peaked panels of the sweater create a moulded line over the waist and hips. A row of double crochet is worked round the opening each side of the neckband, which is fastened with two buttons.

Here are the easy-to-follow directions:

Materials: 5oz. Patons "Beehive" Fingering 3-ply (Patonized) wool in grey, 3oz. green; 1 pair of No. 10 knitting needles; a medium sized crochet hook; 2 buttons.

Measurements: Length from shoulder to side edge, 19in.; to fit 34-36in. bust; sleeve seams, 17in.

Tension: 8 sts. and 10 rows to 1in. measured over the st-st.

SIDE PANELS

With grey cast on 21 sts. for left front panel and work in twisted rib as follows:

1st Row: K 1 t.b.l., * p 1, k 1 t.b.l.; rep. from * to end.

2nd Row: P 1, * k 1 t.b.l., p 1, rep. from * to end. Rep. these 2 rows for 3in., ending with a 2nd row. Now inc. 1 st. at beg. of next row and at same edge on every following 4th row until there are 33 sts., then cont. without shaping until work measures 12in. from beg., ending at side edge.

Armhole Shaping: Cast off 3 sts. at beg. of next row, then dec. 1 st. at same edge on every row until 21 sts. remain. Cont. without shaping until work measures 19in. from beg., ending at armhole edge.

Shoulder Shaping: Cast off 7 sts. at beg. of next row and next 2 alt. rows. Work another panel in the same way for right side of back, then work two more panels in the same way, but with all shapings at opposite edges.

FRONT PANEL

With green cast on 96 sts. and work in patt. as follows:

1st Row: K twice into 1st st., k 44, k 2 tog. t.b.l., k 2, k 2 tog., k 44, k twice into last st.

2nd Row: P. Rep. these 2 rows 5 times more.

13th Row: As 1st row but using grey instead of green.

14th Row: K in grey.

15th Row: With green k twice into next st., (sl. 1, k 4) 8 times, sl. 1, k 3, k 2 tog. t.b.l., k 2, k 2 tog., k 3, (sl. 1, k 4) 8 times, sl. 1, k twice into last st.

16th Row: With green p 2, (sl. 1, p 4) 8 times, sl. 1, p 10, (sl. 1, p 4) 8 times, sl. 1, p 2. These 16 rows form one patt. Cont. in patt., carrying the grey wool when not in use up side edge, weaving it in on every alt. row, until 11th patt. has been completed from beg. Break off grey and cont. with green only.

1st Row: K 45, k 2 tog. t.b.l., k 2, k 2 tog., k 45.

2nd Row: P.

3rd Row: K 44, k 2 tog. t.b.l., k 2, k 2 tog., k 44.

Cont. to dec. at either side of centre 2 sts. on next 4 alt. rows, omitting incs. at each end. (84 sts.) P 1 more row, then change to rib.

13th Row: P 1, (k 1 t.b.l., p 1) 20 times, k 2 tog., (p 1, k 1, t.b.l) 20 times, p 1.

14th Row: K 1 t.b.l., * p 1, k 1 t.b.l.; rep. from * to end.

15th Row: P 1, (k 1 t.b.l., p 1) 19 times, k 2 tog. t.b.l., k 1 t.b.l., k 2 tog., (p 1, k 1 t.b.l) 19 times, p 1.

Cont. in twisted rib for 7 more rows, but dec. at each side of centre st. on every alt. row. Cast off ribwise.

BACK PANEL

Work as given for front panel until 11th patt. has been completed from beg. Break off grey and cont. with green only.

1st Row: K 50, turn.

2nd Row: Sl. 1, p 3, turn.

3rd Row: Sl. 1, k 5, turn.

4th Row: Sl. 1, p 7, turn.

5th Row: Sl. 1, k 9, turn. Cont. in st-st. working 2 more sts. on every row until you are working on the full 96 sts. Cast off 12 sts. at beg. of next 2 rows, then cont. in rib on rem. sts.

Next Row: * K 1 t.b.l., p 1, rep. from * to end. Rep. last row 9 times more. Cast off ribwise.

SLEEVES

With grey wool cast on 59 sts. and work 2½in. in rib as given for side panels. Cont. in rib but inc. 1 st. at both ends of next row and every following 5th row until there are 103 sts., then cont. without shaping until work measures 17in. from beg. Shape top by casting off 3 sts. at beg. of next 2 rows, then dec. 1 st. at both ends of every alt. row until 61 sts. rem., after which dec. 1 st. at both ends of every row until 35 sts. remain. Cast off.

TO MAKE UP

Press work on wrong side with a warm iron and damp cloth, pressing ribbed panels very lightly. Turn in lower edge of front and back panels for 1in. and stitch down lightly on wrong side. Join side edges of these panels to straight edges of side panels. Join shoulder seams, leaving sides of neckbands open, sew in sleeves, then join side and sleeve seams, backstitching ½in. from edge. Work a row of double crochet round opening at each side of neckband, making a chain loop on each side of the front neckband. Sew buttons to back neckband to correspond. Press seams lightly on the wrong side.

BODICE of this elegant Elizabethan sweater is made up of six separate sections. There are four ribbed side panels and two striped, peaked panels for centre front and back. To fit bust sizes 34in. to 36in. Complete directions are given on this page.

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1. Cut out the coupon; print your name and address in block letters on it; pin it to your entry (written on a separate sheet of paper); mail to-day to Dept. W.I, 25-Word Competition, Box 3988, G.P.O., Sydney.
2. You have nothing to buy before entering.
3. Entries must be received within 14 days of date on this paper.
4. Winners will be notified by mail.
5. In case of ties, duplicate prizes will be awarded.
6. The best 51 entries will be selected by the management, and the judge, Mr. H. F. W. McDowell, A.S.T.C., will select the winning entry therefrom.
7. Judge's decision will be final.
8. Entries will be judged on the basis of aptness of descriptions of the product's usefulness. You need not mention any particular brands.
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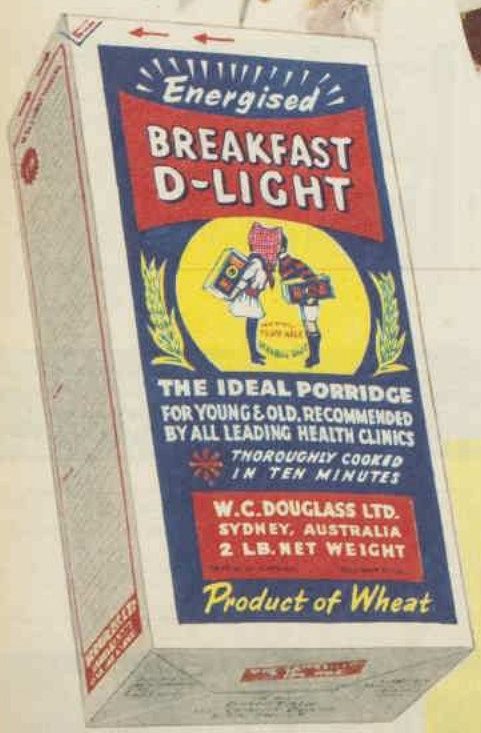

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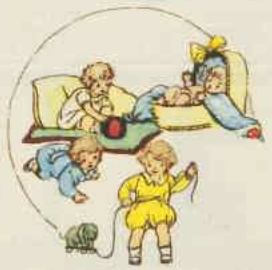

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Every woman's dream

By STANLEY MARKS, of our New York office

The "Kitchen of Tomorrow," on view at New York's Waldorf Astoria, makes many of today's cooking devices obsolete. It is every woman's dream, with gadgets for every comfort.

THE secret of successful cooking in the "Kitchen of Tomorrow" will be knowing just when to press a button.

There won't be any need to worry about watching the oven or turning food over—a gadget will do it all.

Some of the kitchen conveniences are already widely accepted and in use. Many features will be available very soon. Others will take a few years.

The kitchen's dining area is conveniently close, yet completely removed from the gadgets, freezer, and other items.

Along the main wall is a comfortable and functional meal-planning area, where a table swings down to become a handy desk. A built-in television set entertains in the kitchen as the gadgets do their work.

The refrigerator and matching food-freezer are set waist-high. The plastic doors glide open and shut vertically at a touch of a button. A device nearby provides ice cubes, crushed ice, and cold water.

Push-buttons adjust ovens to convenient heights, and open mirror-doors which become transparent when the oven light is on. One oven features a removable rotisserie (a revolving spit) for cooking chickens and joints, and a special griller.

A second oven is electronic and can cook bacon in 20 seconds or bake a potato in five minutes.

The stainless steel range-top has two regular hot plates, a deep-well cooker, built-in four-slice toaster, and combination Dutch oven and griddle-iron.

The mixing centre is near the oven. It is concealed in the wall and glides down to a usable height at the touch of a button. There are motor-driven dispensers for flour and sugar that deliver required quantities accurately measured.

The sink is built like an island in the centre of the kitchen to make it accessible from either side. It is equipped with a push-button dishwater and garbage disposal unit.

A valve on the sink makes it possible to control American kitchen water temperature and flow with a single tap. The temperature is indicated on an illuminated dial.

One end of the sink has a hardwood cutting area. There is also a separate cutting block next to the range, which may be lowered or raised automatically to a comfortable working height.

For tireless walking and working, the kitchen floor is vinyl-covered cork over a thin layer of foam rubber.

The kitchen has attracted thousands of men and women, especially bachelors.

All kinds of new and handy little kitchen gadgets were on display in an annexe.

REFRIGERATOR and matching food-freezer (above) are set in at convenient waist height. The plastic doors glide open and shut at the touch of a button.

(LEFT): Dutch oven can also be used as a griddle-iron. The cooking range is equipped with a four-slice toaster, deep-well cooker, an oven with removable revolving spit, and a high-speed electronic oven.

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LIVING IN AN INDUSTRIAL AREA THE CREAM WALLS INSIDE MY HOUSE GET VERY DIRTY WITH BLACK DUST. HOWEVER, I SOON GET THEM LOOKING NICE AND CLEAN AGAIN WITH PLENTY OF RICH SUNLIGHT LATHER. SUNLIGHT IS SO EASY ON THE HANDS TOO

Mrs. H. Patterson, 21 Mellison St., West End, Brisbane

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MY HUSBAND IS A BUTCHER. NEW SUNLIGHT IS WONDERFUL FOR KEEPING HIS APRONS AND COATS CLEAN. AN OVERNIGHT SOAK IN THE RICH LATHER AND A BOIL-UP NEXT MORNING LEAVES THE APRON SPOTLESS, THE COATS SNOWY

Mrs. V. McGrath, 42 Gloucester Rd., Epping

★ Send in your "Sunlight Clean Stories" to Box 4100 G.P.O. Sydney — if it is published you will receive a pair of bathtowels.

NEW SUNLIGHT IS ALL PURE — YOUR HANDS AS WELL AS YOUR CLOTHES WILL TELL YOU SO.

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IN AUTUMN LEAF. These trees in their autumn foliage make a beautiful grouping of color. Many varieties of trees are suitable for autumn displays in home gardens.

Trees in autumn

Autumn has come into the gardens with a glorious display of foliage in red, gold, purple, brown, and yellow, marking the end of another season.

NOW is the time for people who have no colorful autumn trees to look around and choose the species best suited to their districts and their gardens.

Make the selection when the colors are at the height of their beauty, then order immediately from a reliable nurseryman and plant in early winter.

This will ensure that the plants will become established during the period when growth is dormant and then be ready to start vigorous growth in the spring.

One of the most beautiful of autumn trees is the liquidamber. The old variety L. styraciflua makes a glorious display of red, purple, and yellow leaves; the newer strain of this variety, called festeri, holds its foliage into mid-winter when other deciduous trees are bare.

Liquidamber is hardy and fast-growing, and is beautiful at all times of the year. It has an attractive pyramidal shape in winter, fresh, lush green in spring, and a dense mass of beautifully shaped, dark green leaves in summer.

This tree is adaptable to many different climates, doing well on coast, tablelands, and inland soils if sheltered from blustery winds, which swiftly remove its autumn glory.

The maple family makes a great show in many colors. Most common variety seen in gardens is the Japanese maple, Acer palmatum. This small tree has feathery leaves shaped like a hand, which turn vivid red in autumn. There is a big group with this leaf formation, varying in the degree of leaf dissection and color.

A number have maroon-colored leaves, others yellow, others green and white. This very spectacular group varies from low to tall shrubs.

The magnificent Canadian sugar maple, A. saccharatum, which can be recommended only for southern States and mountain areas, is possibly the finest of all autumn foliage trees.

Its heart-shaped leaves, 3½in. to 5½in. across, turn to vivid orange, yellow, and scarlet. In their native Canada and U.S.A. these trees appear to set the whole countryside afire. They have a dense, regular habit, and grow from medium height to tall.

Also suited to colder areas are the birches. In Tasmania, the Victorian hills, N.S.W. mountains, and Canberra these graceful trees are as good as any found in the European birch woods.

But birches are so far from their best in most other areas in Australia that they are not

GARDENING

worth growing unless a very favored position—damp and well sheltered—is available.

The silver birch, Betula alba, is probably everybody's favorite, with its yellow autumn foliage contrasting so beautifully with the silver trunk. Another favorite is the cut-leafed birch, B. laciniata, with its graceful form. Both these varieties grow 20 to 40 feet if given good conditions.

The poplars are a well-beloved group. They are nearly all quick-growing and vary greatly in form. Unfortunately, they all have a tendency to sucker.

The Lombardy poplar, Populus dilatata, which is like a great golden torch in autumn, is restricted to larger gardens because it suckers freely. Where space permits, a row or avenue of them looks superb.

The glorious silver poplar, P. alba, is another tree which suckers freely, but its irregular shape, white bark, and white-backed, large palmate leaves, which turn to pure gold in autumn, are exquisite.

The smaller-growing golden poplar, P. monilifera aurea, is a spreading variety with golden-green leaves, but it also is inclined to sucker.

Trees of the ash family are medium to tall and fast-growing. They do best in cooler climates, but in the higher suburbs of Sydney there are some excellent specimens.

The golden ash, Fraxinus excelsior aurea, planted in a lawn, is beautiful in autumn. In contrast there is the claret ash, F. Raywoodii, which has wine-colored autumn leaves. F. oxycarpa, the desert ash, is better suited to dry areas than are other varieties.

Pistacia chinensis will grow in many climates and is very popular. It resembles the rhus but is without the latter's skin-irritating properties. Its autumn coloring in red and orange is magnificent and holds well.

Ginkgo biloba, the maidenhair tree, is suited to the cold areas. Its leaves, like giant maidenhair fern, turn pure gold in autumn.

The oaks also grow to perfection in the cold areas, where the pin oak, Quercus palustris, provides one of the finest autumn reds. This species is not ideally suited to warm climates like Sydney, where, although it grows well, the leaves turn dull brown.

The English oak, Q. robur, however, is not so fussy and will grow in warm climates.

In addition to these trees there are many others, including deciduous fruit trees, that will give a beautiful display in autumn.

The persimmon has flame colored leaves as vivid as any purely ornamental trees. The China pear is another glorious sight in autumn.

There are also the elm, hawthorn, tulip tree, flowering cherry, dogwood, beech, and many others.

So you must think ahead and consider carefully the advantages of each one, if you have room for just a few autumn trees.

HOUSES for SALE

SPLENDID FAMILY RESIDENCE.
Beautifully appointed home comprises glorious reception room, dining room, 3 bedrooms, den, fully tiled bathroom and toilet, superbly appointed kitchen and laundry (with THOR WASHING MACHINE), spacious sundeck, double garage, E.H.W.S., W. to W. cpts., light fittings, drapes and Venetian blinds.
On land 100 ft. x 180 ft.
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throughout at the dining-room door, reported Fanny Davis' recital of her wrongs enough to blacken every Sylvester living. ("Crimes you usually find only in the Bible," said Toptree with relish. "Only to think, miss, of a young lady among such folk! I wonder your Ma don't shudder.")

My father undoubtedly took much the same view. (Allying himself, however unconsciously, now with a parlormaid. No one ever pointed this sort of thing out to him, which was a pity. His opinion of himself, because never challenged, in time led him to such impatience with the slightest opposition that we couldn't even have people to dinner.)

Fortunately my mother proved more broadminded: she hadn't encountered Fanny Davis personally, and my own healthy looks afforded so good an excuse for not taking me to Bournemouth with the boys, she would never hear an anti-Sylvester word. All county families, said she, had their hangers-on: my father had acted with exactly his usual good judgment in warning off one of the Sylvesters; so there was no reason in the world for my ceasing to frequent them.

"I don't suppose the child knows a thing about it—whatever the imbroglio may be," said my mother; in which opinion, as may be imagined, I loyally backed her. In time, the row subsided.

The fact relevant to Fanny Davis' and my Aunt Charlotte's London expedition was that Fanny failed to enlist my father's aid.

She thus wasted the major part of Wednesday altogether. (Charlotte at least saw the sights.) They rejoined forces, if such a term may stand, late that afternoon: when Charlotte, coming in to rest her feet, found Fanny once more prone upon the double bed. After a short breathing-space Charlotte again ordered a cab capable of penetrating to Brocket Place.

"Though, if 'ee don't wish to accompany I," said she considerately, "I'll bear Charlie your kind regards."

Of course, Fanny Davis accompanied her.

Continuing . . The Gipsy in the Parlor

from page 54

My Cousin Charles was upstairs sleeping it off.

Clara Blow told Charlotte this at once. Where he'd been, night before, she couldn't say, except with Taffy Griffiths—and undoubtedly up to no good, because he hadn't come back till afternoon.

"And then sick as a dog, dear," said Clara Blow, with less than her usual tolerance. "I don't say he can't take it, Mrs. Sylvester, no more'n I'd say a man ain't 'titled, time to time, to his skinful. Only Charlie, I must say, can take it . . ."

"Devon cider be a powerful brew," said my Aunt Charlotte, perhaps a touch complacently.

"London gin's a sight worse," retorted Clara, suddenly sharp. "Which Charlie ought to be got off. I must say this is the first time I've ever seen signs on him; and I must say I don't like it."

From a person who wouldn't take Charlie as a gift, this was disinterested. Charlotte looked at her kindly; and after remarking there was plenty of time to let he slumber an hour or two more, tactfully asked to see the kitchen. Clara flounced ahead, with some difficulty my Aunt Charlotte was manoeuvred down a ladder-like stair into Jackson's subterranean base of operations.

What she saw there was never described. But recalling subsequent, reiterated exclamations of thankfulness that they'd borne their own provision, I suspect every horror save cockroaches. I don't think there could have been cockroaches, because the exterminator was in that spring. Fanny Davis, who refused to accompany them, remained seated above in the Saloon.

There they left her, and there she stayed. She didn't take the bolder step of going up to Charlie. Delicacy forbade. Victoria was on the throne, and Fanny Davis nothing if not refined. She was greatly ambitious, and quite ruthless, she would have sold up the Sylvester farm, thrust, ruthlessly, all Sylvesters into whatever almshouse could accommodate them: delicacy none the less forbade her to risk encountering Charlie unbreeched.

So she sat and waited; and doubtless fretted, and felt angry as I did at my Aunt Charlotte's lavish attitude to time. Fanny Davis, to be sure, fretted only an hour or so, whereas I, two summers before, fretted months; but hers was the more painful suspense.

When Clara and my Aunt Charlotte returned they made a light supper. After what Charlotte must have seen below, I find her appetite for sausage-rolls (as reported to me by Clara) little short of heroic. Heroic in courtesy, she ate five. Clara, equally courteous, but more easily, ate Charlotte's cold chicken; and Fanny Davis ate nothing.

ALL ears pricked equally at any sound from above—and Clara told me she once quite jumped, but it was only Charlie falling off the bed—but Clara and Charlotte had chat to cover their preoccupation. Quite possibly my Aunt Charlotte wasn't pre-occupied at all; she never could think of two things at once, she knew Charlie safe to hand upstairs, and the notion of supplying Jackson's with poultry was one to appeal to her most strongly.

She had an excellent business sense, unfortunately frustrated by her epoch; she could have run the farm, but for her sex, as well as any Sylvester male. The possibility of purveying Jackson's opened as it were a door; today I see her supplying half London's hotels.

So the hour, the hours passed insensibly: a scattering of early customers called Clara to duty, my Aunt Charlotte noted thoughtfully what each one ate, and what each one paid. The money thrown about astonished her—a penny for a saveloy, a halfpenny for pease-pudding; all mounting up to shillings. (I may say that she kept an eye on Jackson's thenceforward. My Aunt Charlotte was a pioneer of the country-to-London catering trade.)

Nor was she in the least put out by the raffish aspect of most of Jackson's customers. She expected raffishness in London; and since even the ungodly had to eat, why shouldn't the righteous profit? Moreover—and this sentiment, uttered some months later, I particularly cherish — why shouldn't even the ungodly, if they paid, purchase wholesome food?

"Did our Lord, when Him so miraculously multiplied loaves and fishes," inquired Charlotte pertinently, "inquire which mouths belonged to churchgoers? Wherefore no boiling fowl goes forth as a roaster, even into the jaws of London chaps . . ."

I glance too far ahead. We are still in Jackson's Economical Saloon, Wednesday evening, waiting for Charlie to sleep it off.

He appeared about nine o'clock: washed, dressed, in the pink of condition, and obviously prepared with some arrangement of words. He had something in his mind to utter; and surveying the three women ranged before him, but with an eye seeking Clara Blow, immediately spoke.

"Do Taffy Griffiths look in here midnight," said my Cousin Charles, "him'll require hot food for eight."

To both Clara Blow and my Aunt Charlotte these words were absolutely welcome. Each felt towards Charles identically. Each in her way desired nothing so much as to see him accept responsibility. He was now doing so, as regarded Jackson's Economical Saloon; and though but upon a trifle, his words, after the long winter of his indifference, were like snowdrops, presaging a better season. Clara Blow's swift rejoinder, up till one-two-three kitchen's ready for 'em, was a blackbird's shout . . .

Then it was—upon this springtide, and possibly to find Charlie's London springtide run against her—that my Aunt Charlotte spoke out.

"Charlie bor," said she, "to see 'ee completely master of all business here be most peculiarly gratifying. And do 'ee choose to bide in London, where Miss Blow reports 'ee already so looked up to, no word of mine shall call 'ee home. But do 'ee aim to return, I'll not deny 'twill rejoice all hearts: seeing the farm also in sad need of management. And do 'ee return wedded to Fanny Davis, again no word shall be spoke. All us asks be, how do 'ee decide?"

She took a risk, and she must have known it, in putting the alternative so squarely to him. It would have been so easy for my Cousin Charles, that easy-going male, to loll a little longer on Clara Blow's, and Jackson's, ample bosom. He took by nature the line of least resistance. My Aunt Charlotte put it to him squarely—with a rider.

"Though this I must state also," said she, "that do 'ee choose to remain from home, I b'aint able to promise 'ee any 'countable inheritance. Your father Tobias ain't able, bor; and what's masterless land but common? So why not wed wi' Fanny Davis and return?"

I cannot imagine, even now, how she guessed Fanny Davis keeping him away. Obviously her whole gamble was based on the assumption; but to every other view Fanny was drawing him back. Charlotte couldn't tell herself; she simply guessed it. And having guessed, how bold was her approach!

She wanted Charles home, without Fanny; backed her guess, and by opening her arms to both, forced Charles at last to frankness and the point.

That Fanny Davis was instantly on his neck probably rather helped than hindered.

"Yes, Charles, yes!" cried Fanny. "Oh, what a relief,

To page 64

Beauty in brief:

Care of the shoulders

● Preparation for baring the back and shoulders should not require too much time, but there are certain musts to observe.

By Carolyn Earle

CLEANSING gives the right start in the search for smoothness of skin.

It is a good idea to stimulate the skin with some kind of beauty grains before stepping into the bath.

In the tub use plenty of soap, and make the skin glow with friction from a bath-brush or cloth and the final towelling.

It is usually permissible to use the same colored foundation for back and shoulders as you use for your face, but it is not always good to use the same preparation.

Powder and cream are apt to rub off, and it is hard to get an even texture with liquid. So try cake make-up, smoothed on evenly with damp cotton-wool so that no break can be seen between the bra-line and the brow-line. Pay special attention to the base of the throat, which is often darker than the face or back. Allow a few minutes for drying, then lightly buff the whole area with a pad of dry cotton-wool.

NURSE RECOMMENDS

DE WITT'S ANTACID POWDER

"in all digestive troubles"

ARE YOU one of those unhappy folk who suffer the misery of digestive pain after every meal? If so, just read what Nurse E. R. has written, not only of her patients' but also of her own experience. Who can offer sounder advice than a nurse of 30 years' standing? This is what she says:

"I have been very glad of De Witt's Antacid Powder lately as I have had severe attacks of indigestion . . . I find it most successful . . . I recommend it to all neighbours asking for help in all digestive troubles."

3/- GIANT SIZE 6/6

If you suffer from indigestion, heartburn or dyspepsia after your meals, here is a friend-in-need to give you prompt relief. De Witt's Antacid Powder soothes and sweetens your sour stomach, neutralises excess acidity. Just a teaspoonful of this valuable family medicine in half a glass of water is an effective dose.

Moreover, De Witt's Antacid Powder gives a protective coating to the delicate stomach lining, bringing prolonged relief, easing the strain on your over-taxed digestion, thus allowing Nature time to do her healing work. Remember that De Witt's Antacid Powder has been a godsend to thousands of digestive sufferers all over the world. Get a canister from your chemist or storekeeper.

Nurse E. R.'s letter can be seen at our Melbourne office. This photograph was posed by a model.

Away from home—
always carry a few
DeWITT'S ANTACID TABLETS
No water needed. Pleasant flavour
Easy tear-off strips
1/6 and 2/- times the quantity 2/9

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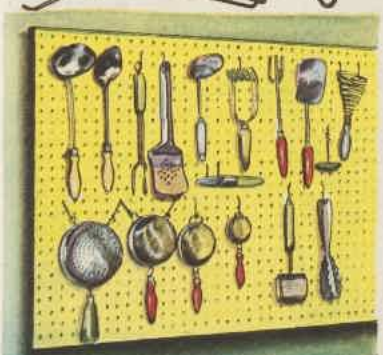

Pegboard makes a kitchen expand

Build a Pegboard utensil rack in a handy position beside the stove, where you can reach the things you need. Line cupboards with Pegboard to give you movable shelves, neater, more convenient storage.

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At Sydney's Easter Show you can see Pegboard and the other famous Masonite Presdwoods in use in an amazing variety of ways. Visit the Masonite display: Stand 43 in John Dunks' pavilion.

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Feel it cleanse and invigorate as no plain water can do. Smell its refreshing fragrance. Always keep a bottle handy—doctors and hospitals throughout Australia have proved that there's much more safety in Solyptol.

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Feel its rich emollient oils and mild antiseptic deep cleanse your skin gently—but, oh, so thoroughly. Solyptol Soap goes further than ordinary soap in your bath or shower. And as a shampoo, Solyptol Soap keeps your skin (and scalp) healthy . . . and beautiful.

AND THEN TO KEEP THAT LOVELY FRESH FEELING . . .

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Solyptol BABY POWDER

Its faint delicate fragrance will blend with your favourite perfume. Solyptol Baby Powder is the perfect finishing touch to your daily bath or shower.

AT CHEMISTS AND STORES EVERYWHERE

"If it's FAULDING'S—it's Pure!"

Continuing . . The Gipsy in the Parlor

from page 62

what a blessing, to find your mother take our part! Hasn't it been but my weakness kept you from me? Now what shall prevent our marriage and your return?"

So at last Charlie spoke to the point. He had to. He saw his mother pressing on his marriage to Fanny Davis, with what consequences he alone knew; he saw Clara determined to cast him off for ever; his nostrils smelled Devon soil, he saw the weeds overgrow his own rightful Sylvester land. So he spoke.

"I be more anxious to return than words can tell," he said baldly. "Two years since I saw my Dad not able. I be more anxious to return than all the world. But not do it mean wedding Fanny."

The ensuing confusion of sound must have been immense.

"Charles, Charles, my love!" shrieked Fanny Davis. "What's he at now?" shouted Clara Blow. "Bor, think what 'ee say!" adjured my Aunt Charlotte. "Why shouldn't 'ee wed the poor toad?"

I imagine the straggle of early patrons—for this whole interesting scene was not unwitnessed: Clara Blow, from her trade, and all Sylvesters by nature, had an aristocratic indifference to publicity—I imagine Jackson's few early patrons awaiting Charlie's reply almost as eagerly as his interlocutors.

"Ask she," said my Cousin Charles, "what Plymouth town have to offer a chap like I."

So broke upon my Aunt Charlotte what I already knew: Fanny Davis' intent to see the farm abandoned. Fanny instantly, naturally denied it; my Cousin Charles, with equal stubbornness, persisted in full confession. He wanted to get all out and done with; and as late as the following summer was still relieving his mind to myself.

"'Twas all her doing," said my Cousin Charles, "as I don't now mind telling 'ee . . ."

When I heard my Cousin Charles' tale, it surprised me even more than had Fanny's. For love at first sight, for the coup de foudre, how many novelettes had not prepared me? Not one of them had prepared me for Charles' peculiarly unromantic role of hero in spite of himself.

As a lover he was modest, opportunist, easy-going, and unconvinced.

He never attempted to deny making love to Fanny Davis. What astounded me was to hear him say he thought 'twould be respectful.

"Respectful?" I repeated incredulously.

"Seeing she bound to my Uncle Stephen," explained Charles. "I thought to pleasure 'em both by my attentions . . ." He was one of the stupidest men, my Cousin Charles, I have ever met. But he was also honest.

"I'll not deny," he admitted, "that Fanny in her fine blue gown made it easy to I. I'd seen no such fashionable females in Australia. And her have a trick of looking from beneath her eyelids, 'ee can call naught but enticing . . . Her enticed I," said my Cousin Charles frankly.

"But you must," I persisted, "you must have said something to her at the Assembly? Something, I mean, to make her give up Uncle Stephen?"

He looked vague.

"Maybe," he agreed vaguely. "Home cider be a powerful brew, and us filled ourselves proper ere setting out. Maybe I did swear a bit more undyingness than suited."

If I had been the size of my Aunt Charlotte I would have shaken him.

"But didn't you see the next day what you'd done? Didn't you see Fanny would wait for you?"

He smiled. The sweet Sylvester smile, so rare, so disproportionately effective, changed his whole face. I, angry as I was, melted before it.

"B'aint that true?" said my Cousin Charles thoughtfully. "They wait . . ." (How many in Australia alone, thought I?) "But where Fanny had the pull, do 'ee see, was that her was to home . . . Guarding my interests. 'Twas so her put it in her letters: guarding my interests. So naturally I was bound to reply to keep her still."

"By Miss Jones," said I, "because you were ashamed to write direct!"

He considered; finally, with the eternal Sylvester motion, shook his big, handsome head.

"Fanny was right enough there," said he. "Letters, save at proper tides, be too astounding for folks' comfort; moreover, the sight of my fist might well have brought all to light. But the time I spent penning 'em! 'Twas hard labor, no less," said Charles earnestly, "and specially as Clara couldn't aid I."

"And why," I asked severely, "not?"

"Stands to reason," said my Cousin Charles. "One female b'aint penning to another love and de-vo-ti-on, on behalf of the same chap."

He was incorrigible. I understand him now better than I did then—but still with the reservation: incorrigible. Yet his handsomeness wasn't his fault; nature had made him so handsome he couldn't walk down a street without attracting every female glance. He was as handsome as his father Tobias, and as mild as his Uncle Stephen. The one Sylvester quality he lacked was will.

LOOKING back, I am astounded that no one had married him sooner. He escaped, I imagine, as the jelly-fish escapes the shore-fisher's net; by sheer amorphousness.

But he had in full measure the cardinal Sylvester quality of all. He had the Sylvester feeling for land.

"Did Fanny ever tell 'ee," he asked me once, "of her design I should sell up the farm? Us to bide in Plymouth, so landless as rats? But for that I'd maybe have returned and outfaced all; I never did see Stephen a match for she . . ."

So Fanny Davis, with all her boldness and all her resolution, defeated her own ends. She saw her chance and seized it, she enticed Charles Sylvester, eldest son of eldest son, and during those first days of her illness, while he so kindly relieved the women watchers, bound him firmly with a promise to wed. Then she over-reached herself.

"For I took it," said Charles, "as naught but a passing fancy, due to her mysterious disease; hearing she speak so pretty and wistful of Plymouth, I took it as but passing weakness. So to cheer she, I agreed."

This was so like Charles, I instantly believed him. And I knew how beguiling Fanny could be, weak and helpless on bed or sofa, cooing out soft complaint in her wooing, beguiling voice . . . But when her letters began to arrive in London, each more pressing than the last—urging him, for example, to visit my father and get expert opinion on his rights—then my Cousin Charles took alarm. He saw Fanny so determined on her outrageous plan, he was literally afraid to come home.

"For I feared her'd get hold of I again," said Charles frankly, "or at the very least, did I hold out, create some most 'mazing disturbance. So I saw naught for it but to bide at London."

So he bided in London two years. The original plan, as concocted by Fanny Davis, was that he should stay there perhaps a couple of months, seeing and taking opinion of my father while Fanny prepared the ground at the farm. Charles stayed a couple of years, more or less easily reposed upon the bosom of Clara Blow.

He had all the Sylvesters' lavish attitude to time; no doubt he'd have stayed ten years, or twenty, peaceably chucking out Jackson's clientele, sooner than face any 'mazing disturbance at home . . .

"You should have married Clara straight away," said I.

He looked at me with genuine reprobation.

"And I betrothed to Fanny Davis?" said my Cousin Charles.

He was incorrigible.

Again I have leapt forward in time. My Aunt Charlotte, and my Cousin Charles, and my friend Clara Blow, and Fanny Davis are still in Jackson's Economical Saloon, embattled.

Fanny fought hard. She employed every resource of pathos, guile, and venom. When Charlie's complete and completely unchivalrous defence left her in the end no leg to stand on, at least as regarded the farm, and when her counter-attack, that she'd thought only of his welfare, was almost contemptuously turned aside by Charlotte, Fanny abandoned this position altogether to retreat upon the higher ground of true love.

Her affections so thoroughly belonged to Charles, even after his heartless treatment of her, she was prepared to live out her days a simple farmer's wife. Gladly, at her beloved's side, would she work her fingers to the bone, seeking no reward but his and his family's good opinion. My Cousin Charles, with one eye on Clara, who ostentatiously began to count saveloys, replied uncomfortably but firmly, he was sorry, but all that was over.

"Is it possible!" cried Fanny

To page 65

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Continuing . . The Gipsy in the Parlor

from page 64

Davis piteously. "Oh, how is it possible you should say so!"

My Cousin Charles said he didn't 'xactly know; but so 'twas, and he was very sorry. (On this ground he didn't defend himself at all. He let Fanny, as her temper rose, call him every name she could think of, and when she dissolved back into tears, obligingly allowed her to hang on his neck again.)

On the ground of true love Fanny had it all her own way—in fact, my Aunt Charlotte, temporarily changing sides, helped her give Charles a thorough dressing-down. Clara Blow also contributed several cutting observations on men of weak character. At this phase of the battle it was undoubtedly Charles who took most punishment; but his wounds couldn't help Fanny to victory. If he wouldn't marry her, he wouldn't.

Fanny Davis accordingly changed front once more; wiped her eyes, sweetened her voice, forgave my Cousin Charles absolutely, and observed what a fortunate thing it was dear Stephen hadn't been told.

The implications of this magnanimity were lost on no one. Clara Blow told me afterwards she could hardly believe her ears: she knowing enough already of how all lived at the farm to foresee the extraordinary discomfort, particularly to Charlie's future wife, of having Fanny Davis permanently on the premises.

Which was, of course, exactly what Fanny foresaw herself, as with a sweet, forgiving smile she went on to assure my Cousin Charles that never, never, never, by word or look, would she remind him of what had once passed between them.

"For indeed, dear Mrs. Toby," said she, turning her honey now upon Charlotte, "I have learned my lesson. Hardly taught, to be sure, by lips I believed loving to me! I have been ambitious, I acknowledge it—though only for Charles. I have allowed my heart to sway me, against my promised word. But no more ambition, no more foolhardy loving, shall ever again turn me from the strict path of duty to dear Stephen."

I have always thought Clara Blow remarkably generous in her reporting of Fanny's speeches. She never played them down, if anything she polished them up. (She was a great patron of melodrama.) This one, said Clara, would have touched a heart of stone.

Fortunately my Aunt Charlotte's partook more of the nature of oak.

"What my brother Stephen be ignorant of as yet," said she stolidly, "him shall learn upon the instant us returns. That is, do 'ee return with I, Fanny Davis; and for all his kind, forgiving nature, knowing what him shall, and against the word of all his kindred, him'll not take 'ee to wife, Fanny Davis. Howsoever"—the oak being the noblest of trees, and my Aunt Charlotte carved from its heartwood—"howsoever," continued she, "I do acknowledge, and with Miss Blow (a most sensible and experienced person) to witness, certain lightness on my son Charles' part in his dealings wi' 'ee. Therefore, morning time, us may make rounds of a milliner or two, I having noted more than one announcement on my travels, seeking experienced bonnet hands. And do a matter of five-ten pounds be needed, to give 'ee proper standing or partnership, that Sylvesters shall furnish. Now b'aint it getting late?"

THIS unexpected conclusion, rhetorically perhaps weak, in effect couldn't have been bettered, because it was. Even for Jackson's it was getting late. Tables were filling, Taffy Griffiths was due, and the life of the Saloon, like the life of the farm, carried on across all human hazards. Charlotte, who had been listened to by both Charlie and Clara Blow with extreme admiration, by these last words returned them to their proper business.

Clara started towards the kitchen, my Cousin Charles flexed his shoulders; and this sudden switch took the wind from Fanny's sails. It was as though the strong vitality of the Sylvesters, of Clara Blow, even of the Saloon itself, once again and for the last time elbowed her aside.

"Speak out your mind if 'ee wish, though there be none to hear," said my Aunt Charlotte comfortably. "In my opinion, 'ee'd do better to revolve what all must consider very fair words; which, in my opinion again, 'ee can do best in bed. Can 'ee endure to pass another night with I, Fanny Davis?"

Fanny snapped. Caught in a trap of her own making, she snapped.

"Certainly!" said she. "Just so Sylvesters can foot the bill, certainly!—if you're not afraid I'll stuff poison down your throat!"

"Did I think 'ee had means of procuring it, maybe I'd not take the chance," said Charlotte placidly. "Moreover, I hear London police chaps be uncommonly sharp. Charlie bor, fetch we a cab."

So that night, too, they slept side by side.

. . . .

My Aunt Charlotte devoted the whole of Thursday to Fanny Davis.

She was no longer worried about Charles. She knew where he was, and why, and perceived his return home now simply a matter of paying his railway fare. Fanny she had still on her hands, a Sylvester responsibility. A lesser woman might have felt all responsibility cancelled by Fanny's behaviour; my Aunt Charlotte worked it out in her mind, and could subsequently give Grace and Rachel excellent reasons for every act.

Stephen undeniably bore Fanny from Plymouth, her native place—where presumably she would have behaved better—and Charlie undeniably turned her head at the Assembly, and made she promises he'd no business to, and by raising her ambitions paved the way to all following wickedness; wherefore Sylvesters, though naturally anxious, and entitled, to rid themselves of she, had still the duty to Fanny Davis of seeing her decently placed.

The pair of them therefore spent Thursday going round bonnet-shops.

Fanny Davis went because there was nothing else she could do. She had no money, and even her return ticket was in Charlotte's pocket. She had lost, and at some point during the night must have faced the fact. But she went unwillingly.

Charlotte was astonished: to her mind the prospect of living in London should have been Fanny's best cure—so sophisticated as she was, with such a taste for urban life. In shop after shop, however, Fanny seemed determined to make the worst possible impression. When asked what experience she had she replied: Only in the country.

"Plymouth be by some considered a town of size," suggested Charlotte.

"Not as regards fashions," said Fanny Davis loudly. "As regards fashion, it's a wilderness."

When asked if she were strong, she instantly said no, she was subject to fainting fits; and, in fact, felt worse for London air. Only when asked what wages she would take were her standards metropolitan; and then so outrageously so, every prospective employer at once showed her the door.

The truth, of course, was that London had rebuffed Fanny Davis too thoroughly. She had been rebuffed at Jackson's, and rebuffed by my father. Even the streets rebuffed her; after her two years' seclusion in our parlor she understandably found their noise and bustle terrifying.

She never summoned Charlotte's courage to see the sights. Except for her one foray to my home, and her cab journeys to Jackson's, she spent her every London moment in a double bedroom at the Flower in Hand. And when at the end of Thursday's reconnoitring she cast all sophistication aside, and whimpered that if she were left in London she would die, my Aunt Charlotte, considering her peaked white face, was reluctantly forced to admit it possible.

When my Aunt Charlotte thought of Plymouth, it seemed a better plan still—so obviously, she wondered she hadn't pitched on it sooner. For wasn't Plymouth Fanny's home?

Charlotte, I believe, to the end of her days blamed Fanny's uprooting for all that followed. She was extraordinarily cautious at the farm of transplanting so much as a bush. She said all plants throve best where they rooted. Wasn't Plymouth Fanny's home — filled with old friends, old associations? Wouldn't all old acquaintances there remember her and cry, "Look, here's Fanny Davis back?"

These very considerations made Fanny prefer death in London. She had quitted Plymouth in some glory: cocked aloft, both physically and socially, upon a bridegroom's pony-cart; off to her wedding, bound for the desirable state of matrimony. One or two spinster cronies, yellow with envy, actually threw old shoes . . .

To return among them still spinster-named was more than flesh and blood, said Fanny

To page 66

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Continuing . . . .

The Gipsy in the Parlor

from page 65

Davis, could possibly endure; and hinted at making away with herself altogether in preference.

My Aunt Charlotte, munching pastry in the Flower in Hand's best bedroom (Fanny too nervous to eat downstairs), after due consideration admitted this natural enough.

So it was they came round to Frampton; where Miss Jones, said Fanny Davis, had long sought genteel assistance; and whose privity to Fanny's sad past, by offering the relief of confidence, would make Fanny's present sad lot less totally unendurable . . .

I still find it almost incredible that this was, in fact, the solution.

Fanny Davis returned with Charlotte as far as Frampton, and was there set down to join forces with her friend, Miss Jones. Some five-ten pounds was, I believe, put up for her, buying her into this most modest partnership, and in Frampton Fanny Davis, through all the years of my adolescence, fabricated bonnets for local swells. Even for the Sylvesters. Her tongue never for a day left them alone, and the Sylvesters cared so little, my aunts regularly bought their bonnets from her. ("Charlotte, what's *she to do here?*" "Trim up our bonnets," said Charlotte, laughing.)

After my Cousin Charles married, his wife bought bonnets. I myself occasionally bought a chip straw hat. An extraordinary indifference to opinion, an unawareness of anything not directly touching land, carried my Sylvester connections through, or over, all.

My Uncle Stephen's passage must have been the most painful; but he was so nearly a saint, he traversed it. We had to tell him. My Aunt Charlotte, I am sure with the greatest sympathy and feeling, told him—if not all, at least enough to make him resign himself. Fanny Davis was indeed recovered; but not sufficiently so to contemplate matrimony; and so preferred to return to her old avocation.

"Her requiring," explained my Aunt Charlotte, "some little bustle of business to keep up her spirits; which in our quiet life, how can us hope to furnish?"

My Uncle Stephen, Sylvester-like, nodded a big, resigned head. He didn't seem very much put out. Bachelorhood was become second nature to him, and he never had thought himself worthy of Fanny Davis. To her my Aunt Charlotte spoke less smoothly.

"Though 'ee mayn't think Sylvesters able for much," said she, "us can still run 'ee out of Frampton, do us care to tell a tale or two."

"Of Charles' jilting me?" rejoined Fanny Davis coolly. "Can't I tell a tale of him?"

"Ah, but 'ee be on the losing end of it," said my Aunt Charlotte. "Live and let live, Fanny Davis; and before all things keep your wiles from my brother Stephen, for I'll not see he fooled twice. Why not have a try for Mr. Pascoe?" suggested my Aunt Charlotte. "'Ee be no worse-looking than Miss Jones."

So Fanny Davis left my Uncle Stephen alone while continuing to loose her venom on the Sylvesters. This proved extremely good for trade. In so quiet a neighborhood any fresh local feud was always welcome as a source of entertainment, and if no one ever got to this one's exact root, no one the less enjoyed Fanny's shafts, so that it became rather a popular thing to buy bonnets off her, to hear what she'd say next.

Of this whole tale, I sometimes see this the most remarkable chapter. Fanny Davis, set up with Miss Jones as Frampton's fashionable milliner, to the end of her life enjoyed all Sylvester custom. Her tongue was never still; she abused, in casual conversation, to each least casual customer, every one of my aunts. The stream of libel issuing from her shop supplied the scandal-pool of Frampton.

My aunts never ceased to buy their bonnets from her. They said she made them fit properly to the back of the head. They cared no more for what Fanny said of them than for the braying of a gipsy's donkey, strayed back into the Sylvester court.

I return again to London. My Aunt Charlotte is not yet home.

She could really have come back on Friday. The several small matters to be settled with Clara Blow might have been attended to on Thursday evening, by cabbing round to the saloon as usual. (My Aunt Charlotte's insouciant use of this phrase was a wonder and a joy.) That she didn't, and that she chose to spend a whole day more in London, was due solely to the fact that she was enjoying herself. Unlike Fanny Davis, she found London purely delightful—not that she'd care to bide there, she reassured her, but as a most wonderful, interesting sight to which even three-four days barely did justice.

Her strong nerves, her strong self-confidence, carried her easily through all noise and bustle; she found Londoners, as has been said, most *'mazingly civil*, and their shops proper masterpieces. Her own anxieties relieved, the thought that we at home might be anxious still never crossed her mind. (As regards all except myself she was, of course, right.) So she took Friday morning as a holiday to look at the shops.

This morning Fanny Davis did not accompany her. She was too fatigued to stir, even at Charlotte's reminder that it was probably their first and last chance. Charlotte set out for Regent Street, leaving Fanny Davis still in bed. ("I trust 'ee don't aim to play the same game twice," said Charlotte. "If 'ee can't accompany I to the train tomorrow morning, Fanny Davis, in London 'ee'll have to bide." Fanny murmured, for once sincerely, all she needed was a single day's rest.)

Charlotte therefore set out alone, passed a most enjoyable morning, returned to the Flower in Hand for the only food she trusted, and there, to set the crown on her pleasure and make her feel a proper Londoner indeed, found a note from Clara Blow.

Clara invited her specially to Jackson's that afternoon because it was then Mr. Isaacs came in for his weekly review of the takings. Clara thought Mrs. Sylvester and Mr. Isaacs ought to meet. The urchin who bore this missive still lurked about the entry; Charlotte rewarded him with a slice of fruit-cake, and cabbed round to Jackson's as usual.

The gist of what passed between her and Mr. Isaacs was, of course, known to all of us later; Clara Blow's own, more general report was that they got together straight off. They got together on chickens and pigs; my Aunt Charlotte at once expanding Clara's original thought of chicken dinners (which both she and Mr. Isaacs saw as idealistic), to embrace such more workaday viands as

To page 67

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Whatever she said, Mr. Isaacs listened to. ("Him 'course not half her size," related Clara Blow, "and your Auntie, I don't know if you've ever noticed it, kind of naturally behaving like as if wherever she is belongs to her.")

For whatever reason, my Aunt Charlotte rapidly established over Mr. Isaacs such an empire, he readily agreed to accept in London whatever comestibles she could dispatch to him; which commercial treaty happily agreed, Charlotte retired to the kitchen with Clara Blow, took two-three minutes to settle two-three small matters of business with her, and cabbed it (as usual) back to the Flower in Hand.

Her parting remark to Clara was that she'd had a very nice time.

Back at the Flower in Hand, she found Fanny Davis still prostrate. A whole last evening in London offered possibilities only to Charlotte. We never knew, we never knew for certain; but we think she went to a music hall.

Continuing . . The Gipsy in the Parlor

from page 66

Thus when on the Saturday my Aunt Charlotte returned, she bore none but good news. Fanny Davis, shed on the way at Frampton at Miss Jones', was already paying her entertainment in scandal. What mattered it to us at the farm?

We had Charlotte's heartening tale to hear, we had the parlor to show Charlotte; I recall my Aunt Rachel and myself playing Chopsticks so late as seven o'clock. Even my uncles appeared pleased by Charlotte's return: and she had all arguments out at once, publicly, over the supper-table, the moment she reassumed her place there.

"Tobias," said she, "your son Charlie have made the greatest fool of he alive, but what's past's to be let go by." She paused; Tobias didn't speak. His side of the argument was conducted as usual in silence. And indeed hardly existed: Charlotte, thoroughly back to her old form, rejuvenated by her London exploits, was in fettle to tame all my uncles put together, and in their prime, and the old man to boot, just as she'd tamed them thirty years earlier.

"Howsoever," continued Charlotte, "him being protected by what us may only call the natural Sylvester thickheadedness, all may yet turn for the best; so I'll just tell 'ee now all 'ee needs to know. Firstly, 'ee owes Stephen twenty pounds. Secondly, Fanny Davis bides at Frampton, trimming bonnets wi' Miss Jones. Third and lastly, Charlie's to wed, and such a wife as him scarce deserves. Now let one of 'ee great images speak grace."

It was my Uncle Stephen who rose. Charlotte had had her private word with him earlier, and his long, sad face was already set in lines of resignation and composure. He alone of the Sylvester men had at that moment a distinct personality: he looked already the lay-preacher he was soon to become.

"Oh, Lord, if 'Ee've been trying we somewhat, past year or two," prayed my Uncle Stephen—at once pitching on a tone of such intimacy, the rest of us were a little disconcerted—"mayn't 'Ee take Charlotte's London journey into consideration? Which her undertook for naught save Fanny's good?" (Though our heads were all properly bowed, I caught a glance between Grace and Rachel which possibly referred to Charlotte, cabs, and shops. However, we could all pray along our own lines.)

"Wherefore, O Lord," continued my Uncle Stephen, "seeing us have done all in our power for one so specially afflicted by Thee—since without doubt 'twas Thy will even London doctoring but half succeeded; and seeing my brother's son Charlie about to return home at last, with us do hope a most suitable female, Thy blessing, O Lord, be most particularly requested; also upon this food."

Then we all fell to.

In the heat of a blazing September noon, in a parlor brilliant at every point—lustreware shining in the cabinet, andirons bright about the hearth—three famous Sylvester women waited to receive and make welcome the fourth.

Themselves matched the day. Layered chin to toe in flannel, cambric, and silk at a guinea a yard, their broad cheeks crimson, their temples beaded with sweat, my aunts stood big and florid and jocund as three big suns. I, on this occasion rather prominent, hovered at the parlor's threshold; so, looking back, observed and enjoyed the splendid sight.

My Aunt Charlotte stood a pace in advance, but my Aunts Grace and Rachel flanked her closely. From time to time they exchanged some probably ribald jest—by me scarcely caught, not at all understood, none the less heightening the general mood of strong hilarity. There was naturally no male Sylvester present, they were all afield. My uncles saw no reason in the world to come in from harvesting to greet someone they would see daily for the rest of their lives.

Charlie entered first—but only by an instant. Clara bounded immediately upon his heels. She bounded straight past him into my Aunt Charlotte's embrace — just dealing me, en passant, a loving wallop. The tumult broke out, indeed, before Charles himself got fairly in; he must have known at once he'd brought home another Sylvester woman.

"Ain't it all lovely?" shouted Clara Blow, adding an expression for which my Aunt Charlotte immediately boxed her ears.

So one saw at once it was going to be all right. Because in the first place Clara wasn't knocked down, which spoke volumes for her solid weight, and in the second, she wasn't affronted. She was startled for a moment; glanced sideways at me, instantly perceived that I wasn't the cause for so explicit a rebuke, and apologised.

"I've got into a coarse way of talking," said Clara Blow frankly. "Don't hold it against me, just bash me when I forget. I'll be grateful."

"To speak so, I see 'ee'll make me a very good daughter indeed," returned Charlotte placidly. "In such a place as Jackson's, where no doubt all example was against 'ee, 'ee might be excused; but in my house never utter such blasphemous words again, Clara Blow—and in the meantime, let I show 'ee your chamber."

They streamed out, the four big women, on such an impetus of energy and goodwill that Charlie backed before them from the door. I might have followed. Clara was my friend, in a sense my discovery. I might have run officially before to open doors, point out beauties, listen to her (censored) cries of admiration. But I didn't. I stayed in the parlor by myself.

The big, glowing room persuaded me: the clock persuaded me, whose tick, after so long a silence, seemed to beat more strongly than ever. It was like the renewed, steady heartbeat of the house. There was plenty of time. I promised myself long, leisurely explorations with Clara Blow, when I had her undivided attention. The little busybody in me already astir again, I determined to take particular pains with her language. In the meantime, I stayed in the parlor.

What I now best remember is the sunlight: refracted from brass about the hearth, prisms over the mantel, the glass of the lustre-ware cabinet. It was the sunniest room, my aunts' parlor, I have ever known. I, idly tinkling out "Bluebells," sat with the sun on the nape of my neck. It was so warm, I have never felt sun so warm since.

I felt more deeply happy than ever since. It all happened, this whole story, a long time ago.

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Savory Cheese Dishes

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CHEESE is a satisfactory meat substitute. It is twice as rich in protein and fat as an equal weight of meat.

It gives a piquant flavor to the pastry for creamed fish, poultry, or meat pies and tarts.

With the choice of cheeses on the Australian market now, the cook may buy her family's favorite flavor.

Recipes on this page will help you introduce cheese into the menu in lunch or meatless dinner dishes, breakfast and supper dishes.

All spoon measurements in our recipes are level.

CHEESE-AND-TOMATO FLAN

Eight ounces shrortcrust pastry, 4 medium-sized tomatoes, salt, pepper, 2 or 3 shallots, 2 eggs, 1 cup milk, ½ cup grated cheese, 2 or 3 bacon rashers, parsley.

Line an 8in. flan-tin or tart-plate with pastry, pinch frill around edge. Brush inside lightly with a little egg-white (from eggs for filling), allow to set and form a seal. Skin tomatoes, slice thickly, arrange in flan. Season well, sprinkle with finely chopped shallots. Beat eggs and milk, season, pour over tomatoes. Cover top with grated cheese, bake in moderate oven 1 hour or until set. Top with grilled bacon rashers, garnish with parsley.

MOULDED CHEESE SALAD

One packet lemon jelly, 1 dessertspoon gelatine, 1 cup hot water, ¾ cup cold water, 2 dessertspoons white vinegar or lemon juice, ½ cup prepared mayonnaise, 1 cup finely shredded raw carrot, ½ cup coarsely grated processed cheese, 1 cup finely shredded cabbage, ¼ cup drained finely diced cucumber (optional), 1 tablespoon grated onion, salt, pepper.

Dissolve jelly and gelatine in hot water. Add cold water, vinegar or lemon juice, and mayonnaise. Mix well, season with salt and pepper to taste, chill. When beginning to thicken, fold in shredded carrot, cheese, cabbage, cucumber, and onion. Pour into wetted mould or small individual moulds, chill until firm. Serve with crisp salad.

CHEESE AND TOMATO FLAN, topped with grilled bacon, is an appetising lunch or dinner dish. Serve a green salad before or after the flan.

CHEESE-AND-CELERY SOUFFLE

Three dessertspoons butter or substitute, 2 dessertspoons flour, ¼ cup milk, ½ cup evaporated milk, ½ cup grated tasty cheese, 1 cup cooked finely chopped celery (well drained), 1 dessertspoon grated onion, 3 eggs, pinch cayenne, ½ teaspoon salt, 2 small tomatoes.

Melt butter, add flour, stir until smooth. Cook 2 to 3 minutes without browning. Add milk and evaporated milk, stir until boiling. Fold in cheese, celery, and onion. When cheese is melted, add beaten egg-yolks, salt, and cayenne. Cook gently 1 or 2 minutes without boiling, allow to cool. Fold in stiffly beaten egg-whites. Slice tomatoes into a 7in. or 8in. ovenproof dish, fill with souffle mixture. Bake in very moderate oven 30 to 35 minutes.

Note: Half cup minced ham or bacon may be used in place of sliced tomatoes.

CHEESE FONDUE

Half cup cooked rice, 1 cup milk, 2 eggs, ½ cup grated cheese, ½ teaspoon salt, ½ teaspoon Worcestershire sauce, small pinch cayenne, slices of buttered toast spread with mashed sardines or fish paste (crusts removed), extra grated cheese.

Heat milk and rice, add beaten eggs, cheese, salt, cayenne, and sauce. Stir over gentle heat until cheese is melted and mixture thick and creamy. Pour over prepared toast, top with extra cheese. Serve garnished with parsley. Grilled tomato halves make a fine accompaniment.

NOVELTY ORANGE CHEESECAKE

JUST to prove that cheese can be used in sweet as well as savory dishes.

Sift 1¾ cups flour plus 1 tablespoon (or 7½oz. by weight) with 1¼ teaspoons baking powder and ½ teaspoon salt. Rub in 3oz. butter or substitute, add ¾ cup sugar. Mix to a stiff dough with 1 egg beaten with 3 dessertspoons milk and 1 teaspoon vanilla. Chill. Reserve 1 quarter, roll balance to fit 7in. x 10in. slab-tin. Beat 3 eggs, add ¾ cup sugar, 12oz. cottage cheese, ½ teaspon rum essence, and 1 teaspoon grated orange rind, mix well. Fill into lined tin, cover with latticed pastry strips. Bake in moderate oven 40 minutes.

by our Food and Cookery Experts

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Homemaker

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£5 for Lenten dish

Two appetising savory dishes and two unusual sweet dishes win prizes for readers in this week's recipe contest.

ALTERNATE layers of potato and a fish and cheese sauce mixture add interest to the main prize recipe.

Consolation prizewinners are ham and macaroni loaf, apple cheese tartlets, and passionfruit delecta.

All spoon measurements in our recipes are level.

SAVORY LENTEN DISH

Threequarters pound hot mashed potato, 8oz. tinned or cooked fish, ½ pint white sauce, pepper and salt, a little butter, 4 oz. grated cheese, 1 skinned tomato, 2 or 3 tablespoons milk.

Add salt, pepper, butter, and milk to mashed potato. Place a layer of potato in the bottom of a greased ovenware pie-dish. Add 3oz. of cheese and the flaked fish to the sauce. Reheat sauce mixture until cheese melts slightly. Cover potato layer with a layer of the fish-sauce mixture. Fill dish with alternate layers of the two mixtures, ending with a layer of potato. Place 3 or 4 slices of skinned tomato on top, sprinkle with grated cheese. Place in moderate oven to heat through and lightly brown potato. If liked, a few cooked beans or peas may be added to the sauce mixture.

First Prize of £5 to Mrs. M. McGregor, Preshaw St., Castlemaine, Vic.

HAM AND MACARONI LOAF

Two ounces macaroni, 4oz. sliced cooked ham, 6oz. soft white breadcrumbs, 2oz. sultanas, 4oz. grated cheese, 2oz. butter or substitute, good ½ pint milk, 2 eggs, salt and pepper to taste, 2 tomatoes.

Grease a 5in.-square cake-tin, cut pieces of ham to cover the base of tin. Cook macaroni in a large quantity of boiling salted water until soft. Drain, add breadcrumbs, sultanas, cheese, and remaining ham cut into small pieces. Melt butter or substitute, add milk, pour over dry ingredients. Bind with well-beaten eggs, mix thoroughly, season with salt and pepper. Fill into tin and bake in moderate oven 1 hour or until the mixture is set. Turn on to hot serving dish, serve with grilled tomatoes.

Consolation Prize of £1 to Mrs. N. Blight, 30 Curedale St., Beaconsfield, Fremantle, W.A.

APPLE CHEESE TARTLETS

One dozen shortcrust pastry cases, 1 dessertspoon butter or substitute, 1 tablespoon grated cheese, grated rind and juice of 1 lemon, 1 egg, 1 tablespoon sugar, 2 cooked apples, apricot jam.

Place a small quantity of apricot jam in each pastry case. Melt butter or substitute, add cheese, grated lemon rind and juice, egg beaten with sugar and apple pulp. Fill pastry cases with this mixture and bake in hot oven 20 to 25 minutes. Allow to cool slightly before removing from tins.

Consolation Prize of £1 to Mrs. E. Clear, 106 Murray St., Wagga Wagga, N.S.W.

PASSIONFRUIT DELECTA

Threequarters cup sugar, 2 tablespoons butter, 4 tablespoons self-raising flour, 2 eggs, pinch salt, 1 cup milk, 6 passionfruit.

Cream butter and sugar, add sifted flour and salt. Add passionfruit pulp to beaten egg-yolks, stir into first mixture. Gradually add milk and lastly fold in stiffly beaten egg-whites. Pour into greased pie-dish, stand in dish of warm water. Bake in moderate oven 30 to 40 minutes.

Consolation Prize of £1 to Mrs. E. Hunt, "The Pines," Cave Ave., Aldgate, S.A.

PIPED MASHED POTATO makes an attractive finish to this savory Lenten dish, which is lightly browned in the oven before serving. See main prize-winning recipe below.

KITCHEN HINTS

AS a change from toast for breakfast or supper snacks try stale bread slices (crusts removed) dipped in beaten egg and milk and fried in hot fat until lightly browned on both sides. Serve topped wth a savory concoction, such as . . .

CREAMED left-over vegetables or cold meat or a combination of both, flavored to taste with lemon juice, salt and pepper, and grated cheese or a hint of curry powder . . .

FLAKED fish in cream sauce, flavored with lemon juice, salt, pepper, and diced parboiled capsicum, if available; or with left-over spinach or peas or diced, cooked celery; or with hard-boiled egg and a small pinch of marjoram.

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Australian home in London

By EVE GYE

● ***Like many Australians who have made their homes in England, Mrs. Anthony Gadd has chosen light, warm colors and simple furnishings for her elegant little London flat.***

MRS. GADD, who was Geraldine Leonard-Jones, of Sydney, before her marriage in London a few years ago to Wing-Commander Anthony Gadd, R.A.F., has vivid recollections of her association with The Australian Women's Weekly Servicewomen's Club as a voluntary worker during the war.

"As a matter of fact," she said, "your beautifully furnished club, which did so much for servicewomen during the war years, was an inspiration to me in furnishing my flat.

"There was an impression of luxury about it and yet when I looked at it more closely I realised that good design, lovely colors, and simple elegance were the elements of its decor.

"Another thing which struck me about the club was that the rooms always looked so cool and fresh in the hottest weather, and yet they were cosy and comfortable in the wintertime."

Mrs. Gadd said that all these impressions were like lessons in the adroit use of color, selection and arrangement of furniture, and were still in her mind when she decided on paints and papers for the walls of her flat. They also helped her when she came to choose carpets, curtains, furniture, and accessories such as cushions, pictures, and bric-a-brac.

"And although there is much to be done—as well as mistakes to be rectified—my husband and I feel that our home is a little bit of Australia transplanted to London," she said.

"My husband was in Australia for two years during the war," Mrs. Gadd added, "but we didn't meet there."

A charming hostess and superb cook, Mrs. Anthony Gadd is very proud of her kitchen. She says that getting meals and even washing-up is a pleasure, for as she works she can watch the ships, the endless procession of barges on the Thames, and "the world passing by on the Embankment."

Every year the Anthony Gadds go ski-ing and sleighing in Austria, Norway, or Switzerland. Wing-Commander Anthony Gadd, who is a champion bob-sleigher, raced for Britain in a winter Olympiad at St. Moritz. His Olympiad diploma hangs in the dining-room of his flat.

Mrs. Anthony Gadd revisited her girlhood home in Sydney last year.

DINING-ROOM in the Anthony Gadds' London flat has palest primrose-yellow walls and white woodwork. Curtains are in cherry-and-white linen. The modern dining suite is cherry and French grey. A painting of fringed petunias by Dorothy Thornhill hangs on the wall, also a set of bookshelves. Attractive Mrs. Anthony Gadd is seen lighting the candles on the table, set for a dinner party of four guests.

ABOVE: Fireplace scene in the living-room—French-grey and white Regency-striped paper covers the walls. The carpet is mulberry. The settee and two matching chairs are upholstered in French grey-green brocade. The Louis XVI chair is covered in a pale gold silk brocade. A rhododendron flower-piece and small French landscapes decorate the wall.

RIGHT: The kitchen, a small but smart workshop, has a green-and-cream color scheme. Potted plants, which Mrs. Anthony Gadd adores, are used with fruit and pretty china as bright decorative touches. A glimpse of the Thames and trees on the Embankment can be seen through the long glass window.

L-SHAPED end of living-room in the Anthony Gadds' flat in Dolphin Court, Pimlico, London. Here the walls are painted chalk-white. A shelf unit, with books, potted plants, and miniature prints, gives color relief to this wall. Heavy Belgian fabric curtains in off-white and chocolate are drawn across the deep windows overlooking the Thames. A period-style chair to match the desk will replace the one shown.

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The attractive coverall apron is obtainable cut out ready to make with easy-to-follow instructions. The material is British headcloth in white, natural, blue, lemon, pink, and green. Sizes 32in., 34in., 36in., and 38in. Price 14/6, postage and registration 1/3 extra.

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now he would never have sufficient courage to broach the subject again.

"Emma." She glanced up at the urgency of his tone. "Emma, there's something I want to tell you."

"It's been on your mind all day, hasn't it?" she said calmly. "Yes?"

John looked across the lake, apparently watching the two children, who had abandoned swimming in favor of playing with a big woolly dog. Probably the same boisterous creature that had insisted on following them last time he'd visited Emerald.

He hesitated, then said abruptly: "I'm engaged to a girl in England. She's due back in three months, and we've planned to marry at the end of the year. I felt I'd like to tell you. You're the first person I've taken out since Pat left."

"Will she mind your asking me out for the day?"

John shook his head. "No. I'm certain she won't. Pat's not at all possessive. She's going out with people quite a bit herself."

"Then that's all right." Emma smiled reassuringly. "I assure you I didn't look on you as a prospective husband last night, despite my remark about Mr Knightley, and I've enjoyed today a lot. But it was nice of you to tell me."

John looked into her serene face gratefully. Emma made everything sound so normal and right. The tiny shadow of disloyalty to Pat that had hung about his thoughts disappeared, and, above all, it appeared that Emma wasn't proposing to make an exit from his life before he had even begun to know her.

"And we can be friends."

Emma looked surprised. "Why not? So long as Pat isn't hurt and we can enjoy each other's company I can't see anything against it. Now tell me about Pat."

John considered. "She's little and dark. Full of life and rather fiery. But when the fireworks are over it's done with. Pat doesn't believe in recriminations or inquests."

"She sounds pretty nice," Emma said quietly.

John's face softened. He was remembering how Pat had insisted on going to the kiosk to buy pies for the absurd-looking dog because she was sure he was half starved. She would stop in the street to pat anything on four legs, and he had a horrible suspicion that when they were married the house would be overrun with dogs and cats.

"She's rather a wonderful person," he said slowly. "Her parents are wealthy and very ambitious. I suspect the trip abroad was a last desperate throw to interest Pat in someone else. At the moment I'm doing a sort of preliminary training, but next year I'll be sent into the wilds to actually go to work on the hydro scheme, and I suppose you can't blame her father and mother for not wanting Pat to be buried in the backblocks. They had other ideas for her. But she's determined to come with me when I go."

"Good for Pat." Emma shivered suddenly as a cold breeze swept across the lake, and John sprang to his feet.

"I'm sorry. I've kept you here talking until the sun's gone."

Emma glanced at her watch as she stood up. "Goodness, it's nearly five, and I've promised to have dinner with a friend at seven."

Again John felt that stab of jealousy, and yet could anything be more ridiculous after what he'd just told her about Pat? So he smiled and said easily: "Don't worry. We'll be back by half-past six at the latest. I'm sorry you can't have dinner with me, but perhaps we could do this again soon?"

The following Sunday they drove to the sea, and Emma, barefooted, poked in tiny rock pools and collected a handkerchief full of shells while John lazed on a rock in the sun and wondered if Emma felt the magic in the air, too.

Driving home he discovered that they shared a love of Bach and Brahms, and so he had found someone to fill Pat's vacant seat for the next concert.

He arranged to meet Emma in the foyer. She expected to be kept late modelling.

Continuing . . . . Emma

from page 9

At ten to eight he felt a light touch on his arm, and swung round to face Joan Grey, Pat's prospective bridesmaid. He cursed inwardly, then did his best to bring her up to date with the latest news of Pat's doings in England. They had been talking for about five minutes when he saw Emma hurrying up the steps.

She was wearing a severely plain black frock with a fur stole round her shoulders. Her hair was combed back from her face, making her look older, very sleek, and much more beautiful than he had ever seen her.

SHE was coming straight towards them, then suddenly she changed her mind and disappeared in the direction of the cloak-room. Soon afterwards Joan's friends appeared and John was left alone, feeling oddly relieved and a little ashamed.

Even though he had been spared having to introduce Emma to Joan, he realised there were probably dozens of Pat's friends at the concert who would see them together. The whole affair left a nasty taste in his mouth.

"Hullo." Emma was beside him. "Sorry to keep you waiting."

"Never mind. You're looking very special tonight. Quite worth waiting for."

John took her arm, and the faint, elusive perfume she was wearing reminded him of Pat. Apparently they both used the same brand.

He tried to believe he was wishing that Pat would be sitting with him, but when Brahms' Symphony in F Major had reached the Andante stage, and he was enjoying the exquisite beauty and simplicity of the music, he stole a quick look at Emma.

She was completely unaware of him, and he thought, with a quickening of breath, that a phrase from the programme notes might have been written for her. "Serene and lovely in a mood of quiet contemplation."

He watched her for some minutes, and at last, conscious of his searching eyes, she turned her head. Immediately she concentrated on the orchestra again, but not before the delicate pink had risen in her cheeks.

John knew that it was useless to pretend there was nothing deeper than friendship between them. To lose her now would be like amputating a limb. Lovable, effervescent Pat was becoming more unreal every day, but Emma was glorious reality.

After the night of the concert they saw each other more often. They met several times during the week and went out in the car every week-end. Once Emma cooked dinner for him in her flat and they played records until the fire was a heap of red ashes in the grate.

But John found it too disturbing to be alone with her in such a perfect setting, and he was relieved that she didn't suggest it again. Pat's name was seldom mentioned between them, but the time was drawing near for her return, and each was conscious of this.

Four days before the ship was due, Pat wrote him air mail from Perth. Her letter was breezy and inconsequential until the last paragraph:

"I can't really believe that we'll see each other so soon. I'm sure everything will be all right for us now. Mother seems quite resigned to my fate. I think she realises that all her efforts to interest me in other men have failed. As if there ever could be anyone else but you!

"I do hope you've had some fun. I really meant it when I suggested you take some nice girl out, although I'd sooner not know any details, darling. Then I can't hurl it up at you when we're married, and having domestic squabbles. Heavenly thought! Joan Grey wrote that she'd seen you at a concert, and thought you were with Emma Curtiss, but she usually gets things muddled, and I'm sure she was wrong because, although Emma's a divine-looking creature . . ."

John's eyes took in the rest of the letter without his being conscious of reading any more. Then he stood at the window, the letter crumpled in a tight ball in his hand. His brain was whirling, and it was minutes before he could think coherently. Then he knew what he must do.

When he dialled Emma's number the bell ringing in her flat seemed twice as loud as usual, and it was an eternity before he heard her voice.

"Hullo? Why, hullo, John! I was under the shower. It's all right about tonight?"

John hesitated, then said baldly: "Emma, where is your husband?"

He waited so long for a reply that he wondered if she were still there. When she finally spoke it was impossible to tell what she was thinking. Her voice was calm, as usual.

"How did you find out?"

"Does it matter?" He felt a sudden disinclination to mention Pat's name. "Where is he, Emma?"

"In America. Doing research. He's a geologist. I was going to tell you about Bob tonight. I can't imagine why you haven't heard from someone before this."

She was speaking hurriedly and sounded a little on the defensive. "He know I've been seeing you, of course, John."

John had remembered something. "You don't wear a wedding ring?"

"I'd been doing some hand modelling for lotions and nail polish the night of the party, and I came straight on to Peter's flat. My ring was at home. You assumed I wasn't married, so I didn't tell you and I didn't wear my wedding ring when we went out together. It was silly of me, but I was pretty sure you wouldn't try to see me again once you knew about Bob. And John—" she hesitated, "somehow I did so much want to see you again. After you told me about Pat, I thought it didn't matter so much."

John thought of the rest of the sentence in Pat's letter: . . . "Although Emma's a divine-looking creature and lots of fun to be with, she's married, and I know how you feel about that sort of thing. Bob, her husband, is an absolute pet and adores her."

He heard Emma say: "I'm terribly sorry if I've shocked you."

"I'm sorry, too," he said slowly. "Goodbye, Emma."

He replaced the receiver and reached for a cigarette. The worst of it was that, at the moment, he couldn't feel shocked with Emma or with himself. All he was able to realise was that, in all probability, he had spoken to Emma for the last time and he would never see her again.

Kaleidoscopic pictures were flashing through his mind. Emma, in a blue frock, hunting for shells in piles of wet seaweed. Emma, her hair a golden confusion about her face, at the wheel of his car. Emma, sitting on the rug in front of the dying fire, listening to the Beethoven record he'd given her. If only he could force her from his mind and think of Pat instead.

When he did see Pat she was almost lost among the mob of passengers at the ship's rail. She was looking worried until she managed to pick him out in the crowd waiting on the wharf. He was able to reach her fairly quickly, but before he took her in his arms she moved away, looking up at him with grave brown eyes.

There was something profoundly moving in her new-found dignity, and he wanted desperately to reassure her—to convince her that everything could be the same between them if she would bear with him a little.

"Everything all right, John?"

"Everything. Now you're back."

He bent to kiss her. He was sure that nothing was different until the familiar perfume drifted to his nostrils. Then, for a moment, he could think of nothing but Emma.

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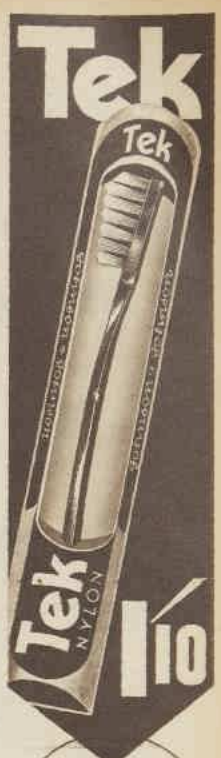

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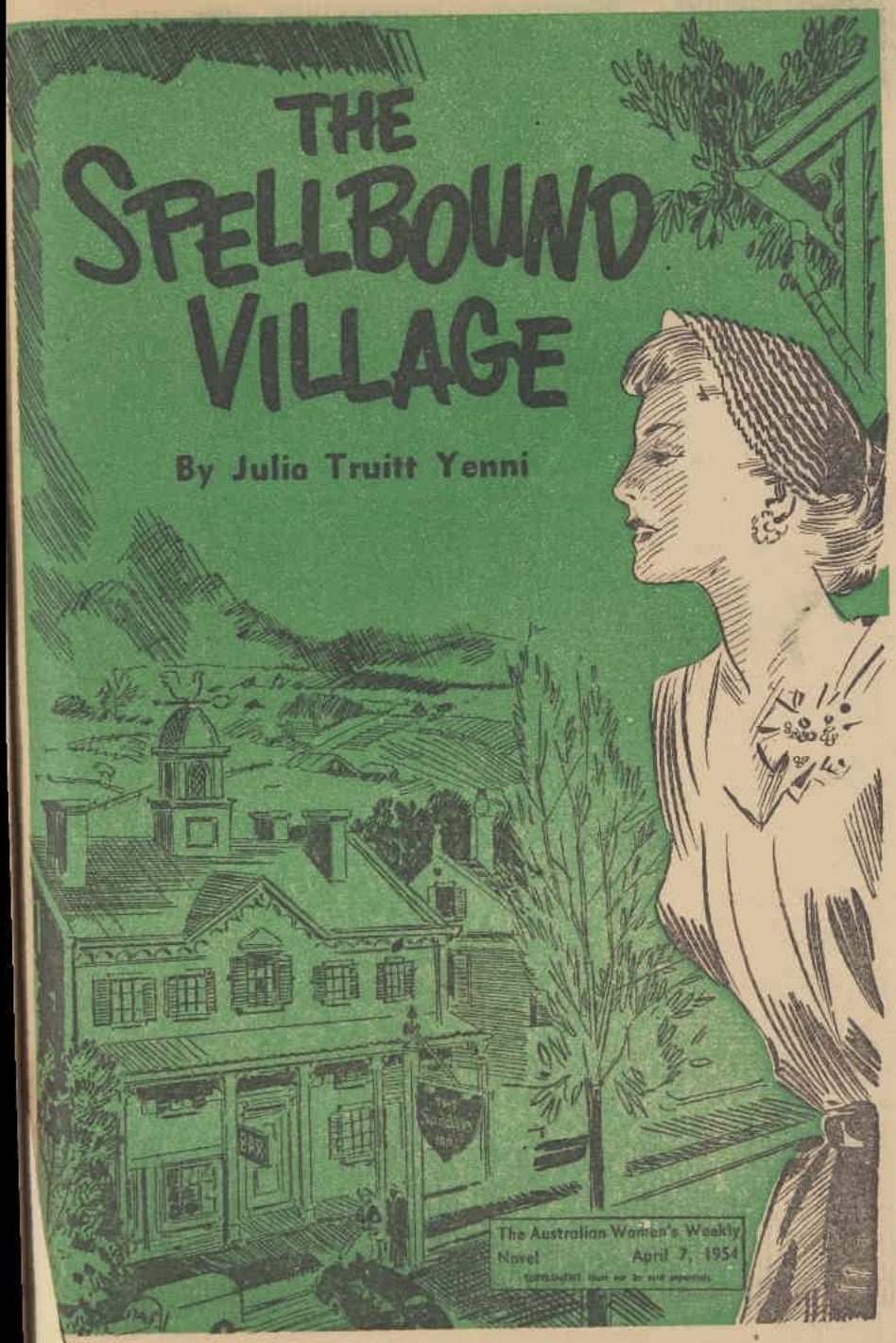
THE SPELLBOUND VILLAGE

By Julia Truitt Yenni



The Australian Women's Weekly
Novel April 7, 1954

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Supplement to The Australian Women's Weekly—April 1, 1954

THE SPELLBOUND VILLAGE

BARCLAY HAMPTON handled the awkward sheets of galley proof expertly. Occasionally he shifted his position in the red leather chair, and when he had smoked a cigarette until the heat touched his fingers he lit another one. But his attention did not waver from the galleys in his hand.

From the chair on the other side of the fireplace Joseph Stafford watched shrewdly. He sipped from the glass in his hand and kept any expression of eagerness or anxiety from his face. It took effort, for his interest in the book Hampton was reading was intense and even personal.

But he maintained a relaxed position in the deep chair and forced his gaze to wander casually around the dim and mellow room, into the fire, and only occasionally permitted it to fix itself for a moment on his companion.

And at any rate, he reflected, in an effort to divert his thoughts, a man could always make a study of Hampton. There was about him an air, impossible to define, of having stepped out of another age.

Stafford could not have said how this effect was achieved. Hampton's clothes were modern and well cut; he chain-smoked cigarettes (but carefully, automatically flicked any suggestion of ash from his clothes); he wore horn-rimmed glasses with wide ear-pieces. Yet there was about him some aura of extravagance, of courtliness and precision, which set him apart from drab modernity.

There was nothing courtly about Hampton, though, when a contract was being drawn up. Stafford watched him more sharply as he approached the last of the galleys. When Hampton turned over the last sheet, he dropped his eyes quickly and again turned his attention to his drink and the fire.

Hampton took off his heavy glasses and laid them on top of the stack of galleys.

"Well, well," he said slowly. And then, "Where did you find her?"

"Unsolicited manuscript. Dropped into Redfield and Carson's lap out of nowhere. Nobody's ever seen the woman."

"Not even you — or Carson?"

"No. She hasn't been near the place. We didn't get much from letters. Facts. Born such-and-such, twenty-seven years old, college so-and-so — some school in the middle west I never heard of. Present address, Two River Junction, R.D. That's about all."

"Playing coy?"

"I don't think so. You get them reticent once in a while. Just seems to think that's all you'd be interested in."

Hampton lit another cigarette and leaned back in his chair. His face held pleasure and anticipation which he did not try to hide.

"Two River Junction, R.D.," he repeated slowly. "Faith Goodbind."

He rolled the words about on his tongue with the same relish Stafford had given to his drink. Stafford watched him carefully and said nothing.

Hampton made a profession of nostalgia. Its exploitation was his private genius which no other writer living possessed in the same degree. He could create with words the same aura that hung about his person — as of something brought to life out of a past gentler, more elegant, yet far more exciting.

He wrote, and spoke over the radio, about various things. Very occasionally he gave his attention to a book. When he did, it became at once more than a book. It became a crusade, a beloved creation to be brought tenderly, lovingly, before the attention of his readers and his radio audience and the friends he met on the street.

Here, out of all the elusive, desirable things of which he spoke and wrote, was one for which a man could pay a specific amount of money and take home and keep. Hence, his crusades were so successful that life-hardened publishers had been known to go pale with excitement upon hearing that Barclay Hampton had taken up one of their publications.

Others had attempted what they referred to as persuasion. It never worked. Shrewd and ravenously mercenary, Hampton was honest. He made his own choice; and almost invariably it became the choice of tens of thousands of his fellow-citizens.

IT was not surprising then that Stafford, lounging casually enough in his chair, felt a slight sensation of smothering, and his hand tightened on his glass as he watched the man opposite him. Gradually, his muscles relaxed and he released a long noiseless sigh. We've pulled it off, he thought. And it did not seem curious that by "we" he meant himself and Faith Goodbind, whom he had never seen.

His interest in the book had been immediate and personal. It was he who had talked Carson into taking it for Redfield and Carson's fall list.

"It's got everything, Carse," he had said. And, he thought now, so it has. The small town concentrated into a kind of essence. All the poignance and lust and sanctimony and meanness and innocence. The way the big writers would like to do it but can't because they hate it, actually, and she does not. That's the best part of it, he thought. She doesn't miss a thing, but you laugh and love it and none of it leaves a bad taste in your mouth.

Now Hampton, who had been staring at the ceiling, said softly, "Two River Junction . . . R.D. . . ." Then, bringing himself forward in a business-like manner, "How does one get there?"

"Oh, it's about a seven-hour drive. You go—"

"Oh, no. I don't care for motor-car explorations. Is there a train? You see more in a train — the people getting on and off — the voices. With any sort of luck, you can have half your picture drawn by the time you reach a place."

"There's a train. But you get into Two River Junction at five in the morning."

Hampton's rosy face beamed. "Excellent," he said, and Stafford thought drily that his passion for detail might be partly affectation, but the physical effort involved demanded respect. Undoubtedly he'd have undertaken to go by stage-coach if that were possible.

Then Hampton came out of his daze and suggested food. A servant with a discreet face brought cheese and pates and an excellent port. Stafford, exultant behind an expressionless face, looked at the servant with appreciation. He knew that the man had once been a barber. He was now a completely efficient man of all work; but Stafford was certain that Hampton had hired him not for efficiency but because his face happened to have a look of discretion and secrecy which suggested an ability to manage the drawn hangings and dim lights of Hampton's establishment.

He attacked his cheese with relish, and while he would have preferred another highball, he was perfectly willing, under the circumstances, to sip his port and lose himself in the well-staged atmosphere of Hampton's house and personality.

Undoubtedly, he thought, this very evening would at some time or another figure in one of Hampton's columns. He himself would become a brilliant but unnamed figure from the publishing world; the ruby-colored port, the firelight on worn red leather, the book, the Discovery, lying beneath their hands in galley proof on the table—all would help to form the background material for one of Hampton's incomparable little essays.

And for all I care, Stafford thought, he can throw in anyone or anything he likes. Things were going swimmingly. Feeling lavish and slightly Edwardian himself, he held his wineglass for a moment between himself and the firelight. Then, making a silent toast to the unknown Faith Goodbind, he drank.

. . . . . .

Two days later, Stafford stood nervously before Carson's desk in the Redfield and Carson editorial office. He made another notation in his little book and said, "Well — everything's set."

He looked at his watch.

"If Hampton gets there at five this morning, I should make it around eight this evening. That would be about right."

"Perfect," Carson said. "He'll have had the whole day to 'discover' all by himself. He'll be oozing Two River Junction at every pore and delighted with an audience. I hope there's a shabby old inn with remarkable food, so he doesn't have to create it, and that Faith Goodbind hasn't got a fuzzy permanent and a lot of beads."

Carson, hands in pockets, walked back and forth behind the desk, his voice indicating nervousness only by a more than usual harshness.

"Twenty-seven years old," Stafford said. "Not too good. I'd be easier in my mind if she were a little old lady. He can get positively exalted over little old ladies. Especially if they have a Hidden Vein of Ribaldry."

"She's not a little old lady. So get up and find out what she is. And try to smooth it over if it's too bad. And be sure he does all the discovering. Even if you get something you know he'll bite on, let him get it out of you in a way that'll make him think he's the one who found it."

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"I know, I know. What if he asks me point-blank why I'm up there?"

Carson shrugged. "Personal publicity stuff — sounding out the future — you know."

"All right." They both knew that an author who made no demands, gave them no trouble, kept their relationship within the bounds of businesslike letters and these as few as possible, was a gift from heaven and that Hampton, if he thought about it, would know it too. But as Carson said, "He won't be thinking. He'll be too full of himself."

"I know," Stafford said again and pushed the notebook into his pocket. As he shook hands with the older man he said, "The time's getting close and I admit I'm nervous — but, Carse, I haven't slipped for a minute. I still think she's got it all there."

"All right!" Carson's abruptness indicated that such hopeful statements made him jumpy. Especially when he himself believed they might be true. He gave Stafford a little push towards the door, and looked after him for a moment. Then he placed both hands carefully on his desk. Between them lay the dummy of a book fresh from the binder. "Summer Brave," by Faith Goodbind, was printed on the jacket, with a wood-engraving, excellently done, of a dozing main street on a summer's day, in which the artist had managed to convey a suggestion of quaintness, with a subtle exaggeration of line and movement that approached the jocular.

Carson did not touch the dummy. He looked at it for a long time, framed between his hands, as at something holy and untouchable. Then he slid his hands off the desk and pushed them into his pockets, and went to stare out of the window.

. . . . . .

The town of Two River Junction stirred in its sleep beneath the blanket of mist which nightly crept in from the two rivers and enveloped it. Towards the edge of the town, where the grouped houses began to thin out into dairy and chicken farms, lights shone in kitchens and barns. Larkie Drumheller's All Nite Eatery showed the only full blaze of lights on the main street, but the kitchen in The Saddler's Inn had come to life in preparation for the descent of the milk-truck drivers.

As the mist took on its early morning pallor, it was pierced first by the sound of a dog's bark, taken up and echoed by others. A rooster crowed but was not answered.

Then the one scheduled sound of the early morning tore through the silver translucence of the mist. It was the shriek of the Strawberry Flyer as it came in along Bottom River from Lunadilla and bore down upon Two River Junction.

This was Two River's only train, called the Strawberry Flyer because it was a known fact that, in the wild strawberry season, the engineer daily stopped the train over in the hills and took home enough berries for a shortcake. Late in the evening it returned the way it had come. It dropped mail and freight and the few milk cans belonging to the only company which did not move its products out of Two River by truck; and, very rarely a passenger, generally a muddled drunk who had got on it by mistake.

On the morning of August twenty-seventh, however, it bore a genuine passenger. Though obviously not a native of Two River Junction, he got off the train with a certainty that eliminated any notion that he might have got on in the first place by mistake.

He stood alone on the platform, both hands cupped over the head of his cane — a figure of dapper elegance, rescued from portliness by excellent tailoring, and wearing such an air of the Edwardian dandy that he might have been one of the train's ancient ghosts, brought alive for a moment but ready to disappear into the mist and the past.

But he did not disappear. He walked the length of the platform until he came upon George Hauer loading empty milk cans on to his truck. At one time or another, George had seen almost everything get off the Strawberry Flyer, and while he had not seen anything quite like Barclay Hampton, he did not stop loading milk cans to look. People who move about in the hours just before dawn are rarely surprised.

"Is there a place in town," asked Hampton, "where I could get breakfast at this hour?"

George stopped and looked then, not in surprise, but to see if this man was the kind to send to Larkie Drumheller's or to The Saddler's. The decision was obvious.

"The Saddler's opens about now," he said. "Nobuddy there this hour-a the day but truck-drivers, but the food's good. And plenty of it."

"And how do I find The Saddler's?"

"You c'n walk — it's half a mile up into the middle-a town. Or you c'n wait till I get these cans loaded and go 'long in the truck."

"Thank you very much."

Hampton waited, his hands on his cane. When at last he lifted himself to the truck seat beside George, the mist was beginning to dissolve.

George looked at him sharply.

"Visit' relations?" he asked.

"No." Hampton turned his rosy, friendly face upon him. "I've no relatives here."

GEORGE was irritated. He prided himself on his ability to size up just about anybody he happened on, but if this feller wan't visitin' and hadn't come by mistake . . . the beautifully aged leather travelling bag didn't look like a sample case . . . still . . .

"Not much of a town for commercials," George said, bumping along the cobblestones that had been laid in the days when the old brickyard had sent heavy wagon-loads of brick down to the barges in the river.

"Isn't it? Now why wouldn't it be?"

At least he wasn't just asking a question, thought George. He seemed to have a real interest.

"Oh . . . commercials are strangers, mostly. Folks around here like tradin' with folks they know."

"Commendable," said Hampton, looking cheerfully out into the clean and sparkling streets revealed by the withdrawing mist.

They bumped on to the main street, the milk cans rattling in the truck behind them. George assumed a cold silence. Nobody could accuse him of nosing into people's business. If they wanted to be close-mouthed, he could too.

"The Saddler's," his companion said, rolling the name off his tongue with satisfaction. "Would that be an inn?"

"Would be," George said sourly, "but it ain't. Not much of a one. Was in its day, when there was travel on the river and folks come up from the city. Now it's more of a boardin' house. But The Saddler's Inn — that's the name of it."

"The Saddler's Inn!" Hampton, poised and happy, leaned easily against the worn back of the truck seat. Glancing sidewise at him, George had to hand him credit for that. Most people perched on the seat of his truck as if they were a-settin' on something hot. Against his better judgement, he made one more effort.

"Lookin' for a place t' stay? Use-ta get summer folks here and they all stayed at The Saddler's."

"Thank you. Probably I shall too."

Well, He'd got that much out of him, little as it was. He felt better. He ground to a stop before The Saddler's. His passenger sat for a moment, looking out. Then he got down. He took his bag and removed his hat in a gesture that even George found impressive.

"Thank you, Mr. Hauer. You've helped me tremendously."

George gave a grudging nod and pulled out into the street. Smart, wasn't he, getting his name off the side of the truck. But he hadn't tried to pay him; for that, George gave him full credit. The back of his truck was George's profession and livelihood. In it he hauled milk cans, furniture, wood, and anything else he was paid to haul. The front seat was his private castle. Its hospitality was offered, never sold, and George maintained a subtle distinction between those who knew this instinctively and those who had to be told.

The stranger, close-mouthed as he was, had joined the rare company of people with sense enough to know every man had to have something he could give away when he wanted to and keep private when he didn't.

But who was he and what did he want in Two River? The question still irritated George as he bounced off the main street toward the dairy farms along Bottom River.

Inside The Saddler's, Barclay Hampton took a chair at the end of the dining-room nearest the door. All the centre tables and those nearest the kitchen were surrounded by milk-truck drivers in white overalls with the name of their dairy company embroidered in red across their backs. Their voices were loud and cheerful and their eating noisy but the odors drifting from their tables and from the kitchen set up a slight tremor of anticipation within Hampton.

He looked about him until a gaunt, large-boned woman removed herself from the confusion surrounding the centre tables and approached him.

"May I have breakfast, please!" he asked.

She looked at him carefully. "You mean breakfast? Or orange juice and toast and that?"

"What is breakfast?"

"Today it's kidneys and bacon. And pie, apple or cherry crumb-top."

"Breakfast!" Hampton said with decision.

When the woman had gone, he leaned back and looked about him at the dark wainscoting, the shabby wall-paper, the rows of antlers over the bar, the Dalmatian sleeping before the empty fireplace. He had been right. When he trusted his instinct completely he was always right. Even before he turned a page of the book, there had been a feeling, a certainty —Faith Goodbind, Two River Junction, R.D. — such a combination of words could not but work a spell.

And it had. Already there was stirring in his mind a fine yeasty concoction which included the rattling train boring deeper into the past the farther it got from the city, George Hauer's shrewd and friendly face, the cobbled street, the other-century houses emerging, clean and a little blurred by mist, as if by time itself, the polished antlers above the bar, the ancient Dalmatian on the hearth.

The only remaining ingredient, Faith

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Goodbind, would be perfect. And if she wasn't Hampton told himself cheerfully as he attacked the steaming food he would make her so, and no one in the world would believe her otherwise.

His face gleamed with satisfaction. He hadn't struck such a gold mine since his discovery of the essay-writing, octogenarian Wickwire sisters. (Revolting harpies they'd been!).

He turned the warm rays of his benevolence upon the bony woman serving his food.

"Can you tell me," he asked "how to find Miss Goodbind? Miss Faith Goodbind?"

The woman looked sharply at him and for a moment did not put down the cup of coffee in her hand but held it rattling in its saucer.

"Goodbind," she repeated. "Her! That strange woman that lives out beyond the brick-yard?"

"Strange?" Gently, without evident curiosity, Hampton let his voice invite explanation.

"Oh, I don't mean crazy, that kind of strange. Guess she's all right that way. 'S far's anybuddy knows. Only she's from away. Ain't been here long and nobuddy knows her."

"Oh. Has anyone called on her?"

"To visit? Well, I sh'd say not! She's from away. Ain't even got kin here."

Hampton stirred his coffee but the woman did not go away.

"You a friend of hers?" she asked.

"I? Oh, no. We've never met."

"Related?"

"No."

She stared at him, waiting, but he smiled at her with the same pleasant innocence he had turned upon George Hauer. She stood uncertain, obviously not knowing how far to go without more knowledge of his connection with Faith Goodbind. But she was a woman who had, sooner or later, to say her piece. She said it, flatly.

"Well, I ain't a one to put my nose into other folks' business. But, if you're luckier at findin' out than anybuddy around here's been, I'd like you to tell me what she lives on. Just stays out there all the time and don't even dig the garden. And if she's got money, why don't she dress different and get a perm and why does she live out there?"

"Out there?" Hampton repeated gently.

"It ain't even town. The pipes and wires don't go beyond the brick-yard. She ain't even got the conveniences."

Hampton pushed back his chair with regret. This was a meal he hated to end. He regarded the woman with respect and even affection, for though it was obvious that her own cooking had softened her neither in body nor in mind, it was nevertheless superb.

"I can understand your feeling," he said, his manner at its most courtly, "but my acquaintanceship, if it comes into being at all, will be only a business one, I'm afraid."

"A commercial!" the woman exclaimed, in cold surprise.

"No." Hampton smiled again and made a slight bow, before he put on his hat and left. He stopped in the wide front hallway to reserve a room. As he turned towards the street door, he passed a woman entering.

Filled with the glow of his so-far successful morning, he gave her an appreciative glance which took in the ageless elegance of her dress, the massed hair swept away from a face not young but extremely beautiful. She looked at him, smiled without self-consciousness, and disappeared into the dining-room, carrying, over her arm a wicker basket of the sort he remembered his mother carrying, covered with a white linen napkin, to church suppers or to sick neighbors.

"Hullo, Evie." He heard the voice of the woman who had served him his food. "It's fried chicken today. Leave the basket and I'll send Janie down with it."

"Thank you, Rosa. Will you fill the decanter from one of Papa's bottles?"

Good heavens, Hampton thought, she fits too. For a moment he knew a vague discomfort, an absurd twinge resembling jealousy at the thought that he might have stumbled into a place and a situation so complete that none of his magic creative touch would be needed to bring it up to his standard.

But the feeling passed at once. With the return of his happy glow, he stepped out into the main street.

Beyond the brick-yard, he thought; and decided that he would not ask for information. So far in this episode his instinct had been infallible; he was willing to trust it further.

JOE STAFFORD slid his car in beside the iron hitching-post which stood before The Saddler's Inn. He had found The Saddler's listed in a guide for motorists to hotels, tourist homes, and cabins. It was in very fine print—as was Two River Junction itself, for that matter—the only editorial comment, in still finer print, was "Only Available."

He made his way to the table in the hall, but there was no one behind it and no one in sight. He put his head in at one door where he saw several old men drowsing before an empty fireplace while the radio droned at them from a heavy round table in the centre of the room. None of them looked up or moved, nor appeared to have done so for years. Poor man's Union, he thought, and withdrew, closing the door gently behind him.

The next door he tried opened into a bar, and all of his tired muscles relaxed at the sight of it. It was dark and old. Beyond it lay a large dining-room, obviously closed for the night, but the area around the bar itself basked in a dimly lit cosiness. Age, he thought, which made so many things shabby, made a good drinking place mellow.

A tall gaunt woman presided from a stool behind the bar with an air at once tolerant and firm. One knew, upon looking at her, that she had probably seen most of the human frailty that is given to the human eye to see, and while she agreed to put up with it to a certain point, beyond that point she would not go. Not a girl to cross, Stafford thought at once.

He took his place at the bar. The woman paused in a game of checkers she was playing with a walrus-moustached man at the other end of the bar and approached with dignity.

"I'd like a beer, please," he said. "And is it too late to get something to eat?"

"Dining-room's closed."

"I know. I hadn't expected a dinner. Just what you serve at the bar."

"Larkie Drumheller's the place for them's wants to eat all kinds of times. But I guess I could find you a little something."

She drew his beer and went into the kitchen. Presently she emerged with a platter of food which gave him, in that moment, a prejudice in favor of Two River Junction which he never entirely overcame.

He had driven all day, and as he did not like to eat on the road, he was a-tremble with hunger. His eyes grew moist as he looked at the platter before him.

"Thank you," he said, and saw that she watched him closely.

"Ain't nothin' but left-overs. Over to Larkie's you c'n get a hamburger, fresh-made, any time-a the night."

"Hamburger!" he repeated with contempt. He lifted his beer glass toward her with a small gesture and then drank from it. Her face grew red but she grinned unwillingly and started, with dignity, towards her stool. Then, half way she turned back to Stafford.

"How'd you land in Two River this time-a night? It's outa the way for most places."

"Oh, I'm here on business," he said casually lost in the pleasure of eating.

"Business."

The woman turned fully to face him, and he felt, rather than saw, that everything else in the barroom had come to a full stop. No one turned or moved, but the checker-playing, the drinking, the low drone of speech, all had unmistakably ceased. He went on eating, but the unchecked flow of pleasure was now diluted by a thin stream of caution. He did not know why, as his errand was an open and honest one, but when attacked by so much and such intensified curiosity he instinctively prepared to defend himself against it.

The woman regarded him for a moment in silence. Then she announced, "Funny thing. A hull year'll go by and nobuddy comes to Two River but truckers and folk visitin' and commercials and such. Now we got two to oncet."

She paused and waited. But Stafford stirred cream into his coffee — and the coffee was such that he could appreciate it, even under the stare of the woman behind the bar. It was a stare so concentrated, so devouring in its demand for information, that he felt as if he were looking into the suction end of a vacuum cleaner. But he managed a vague and careless smile and said, "Funny how things work out that way."

"Yes, 'tis," she said. "Don't suppose you'd be here to see Miss — Faith — Goodbind!" She emphasised the last three words, giving each of them an enormous irony.

"Why, yes. I am, as a matter of fact."

Again he felt, rather than saw, a stirring among the spectators at the bar. No face turned towards him, but the current that moved through the room was almost electric.

"Lawyers, 'twouldn't surprise me," the woman said. "Be a good thing if she come into money. She ain't never gunta do no work looks's if."

Under the pull of the vacuum cleaner, Stafford sipped his coffee. It required effort. But if Faith Goodbind had not seen fit to inform the locals that she was having a book published, he did not consider it his business to do so.

He smiled amiably.

"Where does she live, by the way?"

"Beyond the old brick-yard, like I told t'other one this morning. And ain't seen hide nor hair of him sencet. In a house nobuddy's thought fit to live in sencet Pappy Wicomber died."

"The brick-yard . . . ?" Stafford looked out, seeking direction.

"You'll find it. Long's you stay on the main street, you got to reach the river or else the brick-yard. She's out beyond it in a house with no paint to it in the middle of a meddar which ain't had the hay cut off it for fifteen years. You c'n tell that much even in the dark."

"Thanks." He slid off his stool while

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he gave her his most charming smile. "Tomorrow will be time enough. Can I get a room here for the night?"

"No reason why not." Her tone implied that, fortunately for him, her opinion of him as a person did not affect her attitude as an innkeeper. "Put you right next to your friend. If he ever shows up. Bathroom's at the end of the hall."

Stafford eased himself gradually toward the door.

"I'll see the room later," he said hastily. "Just hold it for me. Stafford — Joseph Stafford, New York City." He fled.

He stood in the darkness beyond the lighted doorway of The Saddler's and wiped his face with a handkerchief.

He thought, the woman was like a witch. He looked down the hill towards the river, from which mist was beginning to move stealthily up into the town, blurring the lights and the outlines of the houses. He watched, and thought of the woman in the bar and the girl he had never seen in the house beyond the brick-yard in the middle of the meadow where the hay had not been cut for fifteen years.

For a while, he considered strolling down towards the river on a brief scouting expedition. But in the end he stood where he was, watching the mist until he felt its damp fingers touch his face. Then he turned back into The Saddler's.

FAITH GOODBIND walked twenty yards down hill from the back of her house and, with a wide swing, flung her dishwater where it broke into light-catching drops and fell into the high grass. She wiped the inside of the dishpan with a cloth and brought cloth and pan back to the house. She hung them, each on its own nail, in the kitchen, and walked through the other room of her house to the front porch.

The two rooms of the house were shabby, scantily furnished, painfully clean. She looked about her with love as she walked through them. A real house, and my own, she thought. And then: Oh, Pa, don't worry about me. I haven't become enamored of possessions and I could leave it behind without tears. But it's fine to have it, to have belonged to it for so long . . . And as she passed out to the porch she touched the doorjamb with affection.

Her object was to walk to the village for her mail, but when she reached the porch steps she saw Amos Tucker stretched out in the high grass under the pear tree. She could not see his face, for the grass stalks hid it, but she knew the worn Army pants, the faded shirt, the careless ease with which he lay.

O careless love, she thought, the phrase coming to her because it seemed to suit the warm and easy feelings she had for Amos. She walked towards him and he sat up when he saw her. They grinned and she dropped into the grass near him.

The sun, diffused by the leaves of the pear tree behind them, lay gently on their heads and backs. She was glad he was here. There was no need to hurry for the mail. And she had learned, long ago, to grasp a moment that was good. So they sat together for a time without speaking. Then she lay back in the grass, blinking against the sunlight.

He sat and watched her. She pulled grass blades through her fingers, snapping the brittle stems, and looked back at him. After a time he dropped full length in the grass beside her, but his eyes did not leave her face.

"Maybe you know," he said. "You've got all of Two River in a turmoil."

"Me? Oh, no. I haven't left the house for three days."

"I know. But the mountains that have been coming to Mohammed! And all of them by way of The Saddler's."

"Oh. The plump little man from New York?"

"There were two men. Possibly more. When Rosa gave me my beer last night I got the idea there were at least a dozen. All mysterious dudes and up to no good."

His face relaxed around the slow, uneven smile she knew and watched for. Yet behind that smile was something else . . . a fear — a worry . . .

"I've only seen one," she said. She shaded her eyes against the sun and looked sharply at him.

"Amos," she said. She wanted to reach across and touch him but she did not. "Amos—does it worry you too?"

He said nothing, but looked at her for a long time. As if he knew what he wanted to tell her but could not find the right words. She thought, with a stab of regret: It's never been like this. We've never had to say anything, either of us. She wished she had not asked the question.

But she had. And after a time Amos said, "I don't worry. Not over you—just yourself. I don't even think. About why you're here, or where you came from. You are here — that's all. Only —"

Now he looked away from her and rested his forehead on his arms. When he lifted his face again he stared straight ahead.

"Faith — let's get married."

She watched him carefully, but said nothing. She was frightened. Something sweet, familiar, was looming into importance, changing in its moment from carefree rapture to an emotion defined, called by name, requiring decision. She did not want to decide; she did not want . . . Amos, Oh, Amos . . .

He said, "I didn't want it like this," as if he knew what she felt. "Getting married ought to — just happen. Both of you knowing it has to be that way, and no need to talk. But . . . we've just had a year. Not quite that. And if there's something in all those other years, pulling you back . . . Faith, I had to—"

He turned towards her face, puzzled and unhappy. Oh, Amos, she thought again, melted within at his look.

Then he moved towards her and kissed her.

Tears stung her eyelids. Then she lifted her hand and laid it along his cheek, lightly, neither holding him to her nor pushing him away.

"Amos," she said. "There's nothing. Nothing pulling me back. Only . . ."

How could she tell him? What was there to tell? She did not know; but faltering, she began.

"I love you, Amos. And I love this house and this field and the pear tree . . . and Two River Junction and The Saddler's and . . ." As she spoke she knew that she was trying to explain to herself as well as to Amos.

"I've never stayed in one place before longer than a few months . . . I've never had anything of my very own, anything at all, except my clothes and they were always given to me . . . and a set of books. But when I'd read them till I knew them by heart, Pa and I decided they were too heavy . . ."

How could she tell him? How could he ever know? She thought of his house, settled among the willows above Bottom River, older than the willows themselves and seemingly as permanent . . . and she thought of Pa and the way their life had been, and the set of books. She wished she could get the books back again and put them in a row above her fireplace.

She could see them clearly, every one, and remember the look and feel of each of them inside and outside . . . which pages had been torn and mended, so there were phrases from poems and stories which would always have, in her mind, a crooked line where the two pieces of the page had been brought together and held with transparent mending-tape.

She said slowly: "I think I must tell you about Pa."

"Not if you don't want to."

"I want to. I must, sometime." And she thought: That's never been true before. But I must tell Amos.

YET Faith hesitated. Because it was important, and that alarmed her. She knew that if what Amos felt about Pa wasn't right, exactly right, they would both be hurt.

I've got to tell it well, she thought. He must know what Pa was . . . So she lay with her eyes closed, thinking Pa alive again, thinking all of it back into being: the dusty roads, the cool glades in the woods, the feel of rain and of being sheltered against rain, the rivers, the long days stretching endlessly before them, lying ahead of them beyond curve of road and lift of hill . . .

All of that Pa had given her and only he had had it to give. As well as she could, she must show it to Amos . . .

"He was a preacher," she said, "before I can remember him. In little towns — towns like Two River, I guess. He hated it. I haven't been in churches often, and Pa never said much about them. But what he hated—" She paused, thinking, and then went on: "He thought there was a simple, innocent relation between people and God, and that churches had muddled it . . ."

She moved, slipping away from Amos, and sat near him in the grass, her knees pulled tightly against her chest. She had never tried to explain Pa to anyone, and the remembering, the thinking, the careful effort to make Amos see him as he had been, filled her with almost physical pain; that, and the knowledge that Amos was the first person whose knowing about Pa was important to her.

"He — just left. I remember that — a little. I was small. But I remember that he went through every room in the house — it was the last real house I lived in — to see that everything was as it should be. And he left the church records on the table in the parlor. Then he put a lot of bags and boxes in the back of the buggy, and we went away."

She pulled a handful of grass up by its roots, carefully pushing the dirt back into place with her thumb.

"You've seen people" — she found her voice growing hard, as if in defiance of what he might think — "they go around preaching and painting in big letters on rocks by the roadside things like Can You Meet Your Maker?, or Have You Sinned Today? If you come down to it, I suppose Pa must have been a little like that. Only he never painted signs and after a few years he didn't preach.

"I don't know what it was Pa gave people. But it was something. I think something important. When he stopped even pretending to preach, I think it

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was because he knew the thing he could do wasn't talking to people but letting them talk to him.

"That's what Pa did. Most of his life. Listened. We went from town to town. Sometimes we stayed as long as a month. Once we stayed in one town three months; I went to a real school that year.

"When I was little we went in the buggy. By the time the horse was too old to go any more, I was big enough to walk. So we walked. Or people gave us rides. Pa never hurried. Maybe the best thing Pa gave me was the feeling there was always time. Time for everything, and never any hurry. We slept in all kinds of places. People's attics or barns or sometimes rolled up in blankets in the open. Only when we wanted to, though. There were always people who knew Pa and more places to sleep than we could use."

"What a wonderful life!" Amos said.

She looked at him with gratitude because he knew that.

"It was a wonderful life," she said slowly. "I don't know what a child psychologist would think of it. There wasn't much of what they call security, and I didn't play with other children much. That was bad. I'm still uncomfortable with people my own age. And Pa's friends weren't always — well, they were —" She stopped and grinned at him sidewise.

"You might give them a little thought — Pa's and my friends. They'll surprise you. Saloon-keepers and tramps. And in one town we always stayed with the madam — of whatever it's called in Two River. The barkeeper in that town called it the Frolicsome House. I can't even tell you she had a heart of gold, like in the story-books. She was shrewd and ruthless. But it meant something big to her — that Pa would go there. She could talk to him. She could—"

Faith stopped, helpless. You couldn't she thought, couldn't ever, not really, make anyone see Pa. She pressed her drawn-up knees against her chest, remembering him, remembering the madam of the Frolicsome House.

"She gave me a lot of my clothes," she added irrelevantly. "They were satin, mostly, and low cut. People must've been surprised."

She paused. Neither of them spoke or moved for a time. Then she said slowly, "That's all there is to say about Pa. He lived as he thought he should because it never occurred to him not to. Life wasn't complicated for him. He—" Again she paused, close to pain because she was helpless—there weren't words for Pa.

"He was the gentlest man I ever knew," she said at last. Thinking: Pa, it's the best I can do.

"He worried about me," she said presently. "He knew the way we lived was right for him but he wasn't sure about me. So he left me some money. Not much — but all he'd ever had. A hotel-keeper he'd known in Baltimore left it to him. Pa wanted me to go to college and he wanted me to live in a real house. So I'd know."

She got to her feet and walked over to the pear tree and leaned against the trunk, pushing her forehead against the bark.

"I've said all this hoping you'd see —It's not that I didn't love the way we lived. But now I know most of it was Pa. Since he's gone—I tried to tell you before. I've found out things about myself I didn't know. I'm all stirred up inside with — with love, I suppose. For this house because I can come back to it every night—every single night. And Two River, because I can go down the same streets every day and see the same people and the same houses and the same stones in the street. It's so different—so—puzzling. I have to be settled long enough to know—" She faltered: and looked hopelessly at him.

"To know how much is me and how much is Two River Junction?" Amos said.

"I suppose that's it."

"It's all right." He stood and went to her. He caught her by the arms and held them hard while he looked at her.

"But keep us separate," he said. "Me and Two River Junction. I love this place too. Differently from you. I was born here and I've gone away and come back again and I've had my spell of hating it. I know it inside and out, and I know what it can do. If anything ever happens"—he gripped her arms tighter and did not pretend to smile—"anything to interfere with this grand affair between you and Two River — keep it and me separate."

His look was so intense that she felt suddenly afraid — as if now, beginning in this moment, there would be a difference. Her feeling must have shown itself on her face, for he pulled her to him and kissed her, and laughed and kissed her again.

"Faith—it's going to be marvellous!" he said. "The two of us."

His laughter was infectious, and suddenly she was laughing too, all her fear gone.

BARCLAY HAMPTON leaned back in the creaking wicker rocker which was the only chair in Stafford's room at The Saddler's. He sipped sherry from a water-tumbler, shuddering occasionally for it was bad sherry. But his face glowed with self-satisfaction.

"A find," Hampton said. "You can give Carson that piece of information from me."

Oh, I can, can I, thought Stafford, who considered any finding that had been done, had been done by himself. But he gave Hampton an admiring look.

"Hampton, you're marvellous. Did you mean a find in a personal or a literary way?"

"Both." Hampton was visibly expanding. "An amusing child, really."

Child, Stafford knew, was a word Hampton used freely, as it added to his air of other-generation mellowness, and it did not preclude bony spinsterhood or plump coyness or any other of the really appalling characteristics that female novelists could possess. But he said nothing and waited.

"Bind her to you, Stafford with hoops of whatever it takes. You won't find her like. One has the feeling that she knows all there is to know about life and people — a simply astonishing air of wisdom and tolerance — but something along with it. Something . . . something . . . spiritual."

Well, thought Stafford, he is sold.

"What's she like?" he asked. "Looks, I mean?"

"Not beautiful. Don't plan glamor-girl publicity. Not the type. But a good photographer would swoon over her. Marvellously attenuated quality—long oval face — long narrow body — long legs—graceful in an unstudied sort of way. Like an El Greco saint without the transparent look. More earthy."

"What's her background? Family and so on. I" — he gave his voice a touch of humble admiration — "I could never get anything out of her on that."

Hampton brought his glass out of an expansive gesture and deposited it with a thump on the table beside him. He gave Stafford what could have been a look of annoyance.

"Really — we hardly discussed it. She lives alone and I imagine there is no immediate family."

Ha Stafford thought cheerfully, so he was stumped too. His inner amusement was great, for he knew that one of Hampton's vanities was his way with people which, given ten minutes alone with anybody at all, brought forth life histories complete with genealogical trimmings. But the earthy El Greco angel had stumped him. Stafford drained the beer bottle he was holding.

"People around town know anything about her?"

"Nothing. It infuriates them. She came here about a year ago. She is referred to as the Strange Woman or The Woman Out Past the Brick Yard. And regarded with suspicion."

Again Hampton began to expand in the light of his discoveries and lifted the glass.

"I gathered part of that from my bout with our lady bartender," Stafford said.

"Her name," Hampton continued cheerfully, "is Silvernail. Unbelievable, but I verified it and the cemetery is full of them. Except for her cooking I'd commend her to their company any time at all. Her husband runs the post-office so she also contributed the fact that the only mail Miss Goodbind gets is 'business looking letters from New York.' Sounds like your little efforts, my boy."

"My fruitless little efforts. Hasn't she any boy-friends?"

"One. But nobody knows how much of a boy-friend, though apparently they've all made interesting guesses. He's a black sheep too, after a fashion, but a local one so it's not so bad. He inherited one of the larger local fortunes — and there used to be some fairly impressive ones, when Two River Junction was in its prime. But since he got his money, he has neither nursed it along and increased it, nor gone to the dogs spending it on liquor and women. He just" — Hampton shrugged — "lives off it. Very uncolorfully. Runs some sort of furniture factory in one of his father's old mills. But this is regarded locally as a Plaything of the Rich, which it may be. Though I've a vague idea I've heard of his stuff. Hand-made, one-of-a-kind, that sort of thing. I haven't met the young man. His name is Tucker."

Hampton drank the last of his sherry, shuddered as he stared at the empty glass.

"There is also a Miss Eve Larch," he went on.

Stafford waited, shrewdly watching for the moment to comment, to admire, to prod. No such moment appeared. Apparently Hampton was finished, for the time being, with what he had to say.

Stafford lay silent, rolling the information about in his mind, hoping that out of the confusion he could construct a web of the right kind of publicity for this book, in which he placed such hope, and for its author. He had played hunches with Summer Brave since its manuscript first lay on his desk, and one of his hunches was that, because of the strangely personal quality of the book, there would be a demand for information regarding its author. He himself was intensely curious about her, and he knew that all of the curiosity was not professional.

"Hampton," he said, "I wonder could

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you do me a favor? I got absolutely nowhere with letters — you know that. I may actually have set up a sort of reticence in the woman. You've seen her. You've — established some sort of confidence in her. Could you take me out tomorrow?"

"Certainly, my boy. I intend to stay here four or five days. This inn alone is worth a week. I'll see her often. I'm sure you'd do as well alone, but I shall be privileged to present her to her publisher. It will be a moment worth recording."

Stafford knew that it would be recorded — in print, on the radio and in private conversation; and was even more certain of it when Hampton said again, more impressively, "I've uncovered a find for you, Stafford. You'll never regret it."

Stafford felt only a momentary irritation. Faith Goodbind was, after all, his baby, and had been from the beginning. But since Hampton was moving along the very path into which Carson had hoped he could be guided, he said nothing but "I'm certain you're right, old man. And we won't forget it."

As he sat on the top step of Faith Goodbind's front porch next day, Joe Stafford gave up at last—completely and with wry amusement at his own bafflement. He had never, he thought, engaged in a more pleasant conversation. Entertaining, too! Yet he was thoroughly aware that each time he had led the talk into certain channels, he had been stopped—casually but as definitely as by granite.

He and Hampton and Miss Goodbind had discussed a variety of topics. They had laughed a great deal. They had achieved a footing which seemed like old friendship. And he still really knew nothing whatever about her.

Hampton was more determined. It was of course, more important to him. Much of the charm of his work lay in his ability to gather small, personal details and puff them, with the breath of his peculiar talent, into entrancing shapes.

But from Faith Goodbind Hampton would gather, Stafford guessed, what lay before him and not much more. Faith had revealed to him no eccentric father, no mother with a vein of fey humor under her past generation gentleness, no ebullient brothers and sisters.

Stafford, relaxed now because he himself had given up, stretched his legs along the top step and leaned against the porch pillar, watching. Miss Goodbind's reticence no longer worried him, for he could see that Hampton was sold completely, and that he found her reserve intriguing. However, he kept on trying to break it down. Probably, in his own good time, Hampton would create a special quality out of this gentle but unyielding reserve.

Now, withdrawn from the conversation, Stafford had time to look at the girl more thoroughly. Hampton had not been too far wrong. Brown and earthy she was; and while he would not have thought of El Greco, there was a certain resilience, a delicacy of bone structure, which lifted her away from earthiness. He liked the way her hair, slightly bleached on top from exposure, fell uncurled around her face enclosing its oval in dark parentheses.

The personal background stuff could be eliminated, Stafford thought. Definitely they could get one good photograph if he sent the right man down. Bronsky, probably. Wonderful on female authors, especially the thin kind. He gave them a look of mystery and psychic intelligence with a good splash of sex. Just the treatment for Miss Goodbind.

While he looked at her thus professionally, he saw that she was watching him, and though her face showed no trace of a smile he had the uncomfortable feeling that she knew what was in his mind and was amused.

Abruptly he stood up.

"Miss Goodbind, I must be back in New York tonight. Hampton, here, has more time—"

"I'll go along with you, my boy." Hampton stood up too. "Miss Goodbind is dining with me at The Saddler's this evening and I'd better prepare our Mrs. Silvernail. Why not stay long enough to be with us? After all, it's a celebration of sorts. The book—"

"No. Thanks very much. Because of the book, actually. I've got a sales meeting tomorrow—"

He turned to Faith Goodbind and again gave her a long and curious look as he took her hand. Behind this face lay the mind that had produced Summer Brave—the sharp humor, the warm and gentle love. Within the broad limitations of the book he knew this girl. Yet they had met and now were parting as strangers. He felt cheated and baffled.

While he still held her hand he said on impulse, "Miss Goodbind, it's part of the publishing code to be pessimistic. Especially with writers. We're supposed to be extremely cautious — a little like doctors treating the sick."

He stopped, and grinned. I'm making a speech, he thought, and I don't care. She smiled back — a quick flash in the brown face which made her, for a moment, not a stranger.

"All that caution is right, actually," he said. "Nobody — nobody at all — knows what will happen to a book — to a first novel especially. But I — just as an individual — think yours has—"

He stopped, realising that he could not be glib about this book, that he could not tell all that he felt about it even to its author. Most of all, not to this author.

"I have great faith in it," he finished lamely, knowing this sounded like nothing more than a formality.

But he saw that she knew what he was trying to tell her. And again he felt, for a moment, that they were not strangers. Everything was here — everything it had taken to create Summer Brave. But she would reveal it, if ever, slowly and with reluctance, and only to a patient searcher.

He turned abruptly and said, "Well, Hampton," and started towards his car. He had neither time nor desire for such a quest.

Yet that afternoon, as he stopped his car on the mountain above Two River Junction and took a last look back at the town fitted into the triangle of land between the two rivers, a sudden longing and loneliness seized him with violence. Life itself lay there, he thought — confined in a small space but complete, stripped of complications, simple enough to grasp in the hand.

City-born and city-bred, he scoffed inwardly at his own imagery. Don't be an ass, he thought.

Yet nothing his mind could do could prevent the feeling of desolation, of something lost, that surged through him as he turned back towards the road ahead and pulled the car away, out of sight of the little town, white and innocent, gleaming like a jewel held in the palm of a hand.

. . . . . .

Faith closed her door and started the walk into the village early in the morning while the mist still lay in the hollow of land between the hills and the two rivers.

She walked slowly, and when she reached the old brick-oven she sat down beside it, watching the mist take on the white brilliance that preceded its dissolution. The milk trucks began to loom into view and roar past her, towards the still invisible village. George Hauer's truck came into sight going in the opposite direction, the clatter of its empty milk cans preceding it.

She lifted her hand in greeting and George nodded; then, as if he had just remembered something, he pulled his truck up beside her.

"Out early, ain't yuh?"

"Yes."

"Heard y' had company this week. Brought him to The Saddler's myself. Didn't know he come t' see you, though."

"Yes," she said. He looked hopefully at her and, for the hundredth time since her arrival in Two River, she knew that more was expected of her, but did not know exactly how to give it. He looked at her for a moment longer, then, mild disappointment marking his face, put the truck into gear and departed.

Faith got up and resumed her walk. Something was wanted, expected of her —information, conformity — she did not know exactly what, nor if she had it to give. With Pa, friendliness and affection had surrounded her always. It must be here too. Pa had said it was everywhere and she believed him. Yet she felt, and not for the first time, that she and Pa were different and that his ways of finding love and friendship were not her own. She must learn from the beginning.

But she could wait. She did not mind the aloneness, the time for thinking and working.

Reaching the outskirts of the village, Faith also reached the moment for her usual decision: Should she walk the length of town to the post-office along the main street, or go through the alley? It made a difference, for Two River's street and alley might have belonged to different towns, different civilisations.

The street was immaculate. Painted house-fronts and fences gleamed with cleanliness. Porches were washed daily. The leaves and seeds that fell from the ancient sycamores and maples were swept up as swiftly as they fell. Small patches of lawn lay in untrodden perfection beside spotless doorsteps.

But along the alley, from which the back yards could be seen, all restraint ended. Here clotheslines flaunted their bright banners into the wind. Ancient sheds, unused barns, stood unpainted and vine-hung.

This municipal schizophrenia fascinated Faith. It affected her own attitude, so that when she walked down the street she went briskly, keeping to her own side of the pavement and crossing at the corners. When she went through the alley she dawdled, pausing to lean over fences and talk to children, to stare at rubbish piles, make friends with dogs, and admire the riotous abandon of the flowers.

Today she hesitated, as always. Then, George's stare having left her feeling defensive, she chose the formality of the street. Here she received nods and even smiles as she passed women scouring their porches, but today it seemed that the curiosity, the expectation, which she had seen on George Hauer's face was intensified in each face she passed. A feeling close to guilt possessed her.

She found herself hurrying towards the post office, though there was no reason for haste.

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She was glad too when she saw that nobody was in the post office ahead of her. Ed Silvernail was sorting the mail. She gave him a quick smile and waited. Then she noticed that his wife Rosa was behind him, holding a broom but making no effort to sweep.

"Mornin', Miss Goodbind," she said.

"Good morning."

"Your friends find you all right? They put up with us at The Saddler's. I told 'em where to find you."

"Thank you—they found me."

Rosa continued to look at her with the look that gave an effect of sucking. Faith found herself gripping the window shelf as if to prevent being pulled in by it. Ed pushed a magazine and a catalogue across the shelf towards her. She took them up quickly.

"That's all?"

"Yup, that's all today," he said. But before she could turn away and escape, Rosa said, "Guess they don't have write you when they come up themselves."

"No . . . no, I guess they don't."

"Never 'd a thought that's where you come from—New York."

"I—I didn't. I've never been there."

The woman continued to stare, her curiosity twisting her face into a look of hunger. Faith saw it and thought: What does she want? What can I tell her? Should I say: Mrs. Silvernail, I came to this place because I liked the name of it and the agent in Lunadillo told me there was a house here I could buy for five hundred dollars. I cannot tell you of my native heath because I don't remember it. I have had no interesting love affairs. My father lived a life of which you would not approve. I am living on the very last of the money he left me, and I have sold a book which took me a long time to write and which I hope will earn enough money for me to live on while I write another.

These were the things which Rosa Silvernail—and George Hauer and all the others—wanted to know. And she could not say any of them. She had not lived the sort of life about which she could drop casual little facts into a conversation. Those not harrowed by it regarded it as exotic and unbelievable, like the life of a circus freak. No one (except Amos) had ever accepted it for what it had been while she lived it—natural and good.

She turned towards the door, pulling away from Rosa's look with effort, and saw Amos come in. He grinned and lifted his hand to her.

"Wait for me," he said, and turned to the window for his mail. She waited, knowing that Rosa now included him in the suction of her stare and that this small evidence of their familiarity had been quickly pulled into the bottomless dust-bag where she kept her scraps of information. But there was a difference in the way Rosa looked at him. Faith thought—possibly because she had known his father before him.

Amos and Faith left the post office together and walked towards Bottom River, where he had set up his factory in his father's old grain mill. They did not enter the building, but crossed the bridge over the millrace and sat on the pile at the edge of the river where barges had once tied up, waiting for bags of flour and feed to take down river.

Her tenseness began to relax in Amos' presence. "Poor Rosa," he said presently. "You're killing her by inches."

"I know. But—what is there to say? What can I tell her?"

"Nothing. You won't have to, as a matter of fact. Sooner or later she'll find out everything for herself. Funny—" He began to toss broken bits of twig into the water. "It's funny how we all have our talents—or think we have. Rosa's is collecting information. She's expert at it. Her father was Two River's doctor for forty years, and her mother and grandmother before her ran The Saddler's. And now Ed's postmaster. So nobody for fifty miles around has done anything without Rosa knowing about it. So that, by now, she thinks it's her right to know."

He dropped a blossom into the water and watched it dart delicately downstream.

"Queer thing," he went on after a time. "She doesn't gossip much. Being above gossip is part of her—well, her pride. But she simply has to know—and know first. So when somebody says: Rosa, did you hear so-and-so, she can give them a look and say she's known it for months, and gets over the idea that she hasn't thought it worth mentioning."

Faith stared into the water. She did not think what he said was funny and felt that his own amusement was only on the surface. She felt, indeed, that he might be trying to—to warn her.

She said slowly: "It—there's something worse now. I—" She stopped. Some sentences, moving easily enough through the mind, were unbelievably hard to say.

"I've written a book," she forced out at last, and knew her voice could not have sounded more guilty if she had said, I've robbed the bank.

"So that's it," he said. "I thought there was something."

FAITH felt absurdly relieved. She did not know if other writers had this feeling of guilt, possibly because writing was a craft pursued, of necessity, alone, almost in secret. His careless acceptance of her statement left her foolishly light-headed with relief.

"They—it's going to be published. That's what the men came here to see me about. Only—how could I tell Mrs. Silvernail? I couldn't just say—" She blundered unhappily to a stop.

He laughed. "Some people could and would. Not you, though. But everything will solve itself now, won't it?"

"How?"

"Well, if it's going to be published that will get in the papers, won't it? And even here in Two River, somebody's bound to see it. Then everybody can heave a good sigh and say, So that's it. That's why Faith Goodbind's so peculiar."

"The papers," she repeated slowly. "I—I suppose so. I—they're curious, too, Amos—it's not just Two River. Those men who were here—they were tactful and charming but not too different from Rosa, really. And the letters from New York—"

She stood up, looking out into the water.

"I don't know why I feel like this. I'm not—ashamed. Only—all those years—they belonged to Pa and me and the people who knew us and loved us. I can't—"

She stopped, for there was more within her than she could explain even to Amos. What she had said was true but there was more than that. Perhaps the years with Pa, who had given himself completely, holding nothing back that was wanted or needed, had left her with an abnormal need of privacy.

She was not like her father. Her life, she knew, could never be like his. And she needed time alone before she could admit anyone, even Amos, into this cell of seclusion she had built for herself.

The feeling she had now, that the walls to the cell were crumbling and that the events leading to this were slipping from her control, made panic rise within her. But she forced herself to push it down, to cast off the wish that she had never sent her manuscript away, since it seemed to be forcing the opening into her retreat.

She had wanted to write. It was the only work she had ever wanted. And it was, in its way, her tribute to Pa. She could never explain him. But the people he had known and loved she could give, seen with his clarity, warmed by his understanding and affection, to the world. She would go on—nothing could frighten her.

She stared into the water, feeling herself tighten into resistance against her own emotions at the assaults on her privacy. She knew that she was even more stubborn than frightened.

Rosa Silvernail slid a hand from under the covers and flicked off the alarm clock. She was already awake and could have turned it off just as easily before it rang, but Rosa liked things definite. The beginning of her day was defined by the alarm clock's explosion at four; therefore she always waited for it.

Now, also by custom, she lay in bed until the town's two public clocks struck the hour—thus establishing it with unmistakable thoroughness. First the big clock on the Grange Hall, which was so nearby that Rosa could hear the wheeze of its mechanism before the bell itself began to boom out, big and slow and impressive.

Before it reached its second note, however, the little clock over Hartling's jewellery store came suddenly to life and rapped out its staccato little bang-bang-bang-bang between the second and third notes of the Grange clock, leaving to it the anti-climax of telling something already told.

The two clocks always reminded Rosa of Jonathan Bricker and his wife. Jonathan began slowly, in his deep voice, to say something, and Lucy jumped in midway and finished it ahead of him. But Jonathan, looking helplessly at her, always finished his sentence anyway because once started, he seemed unable to stop.

A person couldn't blame Jonathan, Rosa thought. A man had to have somebody that would let him finish a sentence once in a while, and Evie Larch was good at that if at nothing else. When you came down to it, that's about all her father had ever trained her for.

Rosa slid out of bed and, silent in the dark, put on her clothes. She never minded getting up at four in the morning. As she looked out of her window on the third floor of The Saddler's over the village, her sense of power and possession was at its highest. By the time Two River stirred and moved and pulled itself with reluctance, out of the sucking depths of sleep and mist, Rosa Silvernail sat alert behind The Saddler's bar, ready to face whatever came.

Thus she sat at ten in the morning on the seventh day of October. Breakfast was behind her and she had helped Ed sort the mail—though he had reminded her, as he did daily, that he could easily do it himself. Janie Hauer was finishing the last of the breakfast dishes and would prepare the corn and beans for dinner.

Rosa was smoothing the foam off a glass of beer for Pat Traphaven when Fern Perris entered the dining-room. In haste and obvious excitement, Rosa had caught a glimpse of her through the door as she came in from the street, so it was easy to pretend now that she did not know she was there and to make her handling of Pat's beer more deliberate.

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Fern might have annoyed Rosa. All that put-on with book clubs and such, and getting an interior decorator from Rochester to fix her house up. But when Rosa found herself being stung into irritation she had only to remember Fern's Ma and those boarders she used to take in, if you wanted to call them boarders, ha!

She waited to wipe the bar, then moved into the dining-room, slowly and with dignity.

"Thought you was still at your sister's in Lunadilla," she said.

"Rosa! I simply rushed back! Really, it's amazing! But I feel an awful fool. If any of us had thought we'd have known!"

ROSA said nothing. She did not know what Fern was talking about, but she certainly wasn't going to admit that.

"Look!" Fern dropped a book and a folded newspaper on the table between them. "Fay was all excited and couldn't believe nobody in Two River knew about it!"

She smoothed the paper. Rosa stared at it and at the book. For a moment nothing about either of them meant anything to her. Then she saw that the photograph in the corner of the newspaper page, under the heading 'Books in Review,' was of a face familiar to her. And the name at the bottom of the book jacket was Faith Goodbind.

She felt a slow flush creep up into her face and knew that Fern saw it and thereby guessed that her revelation came as a surprise to Rosa. Even now she could hear the triumph in Fern's voice.

"I knew you'd be amazed!" Fern said.

Slow anger began to stir within Rosa. The strange feeling of enmity she had felt towards Faith Goodbind from the time she had come was now intensified almost beyond bearing. She felt blindly that this had been deliberate. Fern, all of them, would be laughing at her because this had happened and she had never guessed, not even when those men from New York had been here right under her nose.

Little phrases from the newspaper column caught at her consciousness. ". . . the town that most of us came from and all of us want to find again . . . Miss Goodbind handles with warmth and keen insight the intricacy of small-town existence . . . living herself in Two River Junction . . ."

"Look!" Fern pushed the book itself forward. "It's real-looking, isn't it? You'd think it was Two River."

Rosa stared at the picture on the book jacket. Slowly she opened the cover and turned the pages to the front with the same fixed gaze: the title-page, the page that said 'In Memory of Singleton Goodbind,' and a page that said: 'All characters in this story are fictitious. Any resemblance to persons living or dead is purely coincidental.'

She read this slowly, the words working their way into her consciousness through the haze of her anger. Fern continued to chatter beside her.

". . . Ha-ha-ha. I bet Amos Tucker knew, ha-ha-ha May Anna Parker will go crazy, who'll make a fuss over her old Strolls in a Garden any more, ha-ha-ha when I think of you not knowing, Rosa, of all people, ha-ha-ha . . ."

None of what followed was planned by Rosa. She spoke by instinct, driven by her bitter anger.

"I was surprised all right," she said slowly "that she really printed it."

Fern cut off her flow of chatter.

"Now, Rosa," she said sharply. "Don't tell me now you knew all about it. I could tell you were surprised as me."

"I was." Rosa shook her head as if in sorrow. "I thought she'd have more—well, never mind. It ain't for me to say." She began to move with dignity towards the bar, as if the matter was closed.

Fern snatched up the book and darted after her. Rosa's anger began to lose some of its pain. Her feeling of control was returning. Calmly she took her place behind the now-deserted bar.

"What are you talking about, Rosa Silvernail?" Fern demanded.

"I ain't talking about anything. And don't you forget it! If that girl had her reasons for coming here, looking around, I don't know what they were—don't forget I told you that."

Fern stared at her, comprehension coming slowly.

"But—I can't see—you mean—it can't be about people in Two River. She don't know anybody here."

"Fernie, you better watch you tongue. Look—" Rosa took the book from her and opened it. "They're being careful not to get in no trouble. 'All characters in this story are fictitious.' That means they're made up. So if anybody begins to catch on—"

"But it says that in a lot of books. Not all of them, but—"

"That's right. Just in some of them. They don't aim to get into trouble and I don't neither. And if you got any sense, you don't."

"But Fay read part of it, and she didn't notice—"

"No. Just like I say. That's being smart—twisting things around so nobody'll notice. Not unless they know. And nobody"—she stared virtuously at Fern—"don't need to know."

Fern took the book into her hands and studied it, her face drawn sharp with horrified fascination. Then she clutched it against her chest and fled without another word.

Rosa watched her go. The violent churning of her emotions began to subside, and gradually her sense of power and control returned.

Behind her she heard the party-line telephone come to shrill life. Two shorts and a long. That would be Dolly Stillwell's ring. Fern, she thought complacently, must have got home by now. And she wasn't losing any time.

. . . . . .

If Two River Junction's emotions and mental processes had been made of tangible substance, the waves stirred by the forces of their upheaval during the weeks that followed could have been seen rolling over the town and even beyond its borders. One wave washed as far as the offices of Redfield and Carson where Milton, from the sales department, placed a letter on Joe Stafford's desk. It was on a letterhead printed with 'Roger Tilton, Soda, Drugs, Stationery,' and contained an order for one hundred copies of "Summer Brave."

Stafford took up the letter and looked at it. So Two River was taking it as hard as that! He hadn't expected that. He remembered Faith Goodbind's guarded face, her stubborn defence of her privacy, and felt a flash of sympathy for her.

Well, that was her problem. And a hundred copies was a hundred copies, and even outside Two River Junction it was beginning to look—he could not possibly say for certain but it was beginning to look—as if he had, after all, hit the jack-pot.

. . . . . .

The waves struck Faith Goodbind as she walked in from her house to the post office. She felt them in the nervous greetings, in the stares that followed her with more painful attention than before, and she was bewildered.

They rolled over back fences along telephone lines . . .

". . . I know it don't seem exactly like—but do you reckon it could be . . ."

"Summer Brave" was being read in Two River Junction with a care and devotion to detail that it would receive nowhere else. The faces that bent over it were anxious, greedy, fearful, satisfied. Each character, each incident, was pored over, studied, twisted into a variety of shapes and sizes.

It was being read by Rosa Silvernail. She kept it at the bar on the shelf beside the brandy bottles where ordinarily she kept her crocheting, and picked it up between customers. This made her reading of it slow, with pauses between for thinking and comparing, and gave time for fear to grow within her.

She could not deceive herself. She knew that Faith Goodbind could not have filled her book with Two River people and happenings. Yet the number of parallels that could be drawn, by minds intent on doing so, objectarily appalled her.

Panic-stricken, she set her defences to work. When you came down to it, she hadn't said a thing a person could pin her down to. All she had done was to set Fern's ferreting little mind to working and land knows it didn't take much to do that. And if a person had to be so close-mouthed as that Faith Goodbind it was bound to set people's suspicions going and start any kind of a thing at all.

In all of Two River, Rosa was the only person who could not be drawn into a discussion of the book after that one time, at first, when Fern had caught her off guard.

"Wasn't never much of a one for readin'," she would say coldly, and maintain a frozen silence at the bar in the face of such phrases as, ". . . Couldn't miss them two in the hay-barn . . . Wonder how Jonathan's feelin' . . . If old Hiram Tucker was alive he'd have her horsewhipped . . . Bet it's got Amy Hauer wonderin' if it's her Jamie or if it ain't . . ."

Only occasionally there was a muttered, angry protest.

"The hull thing's crazy. . . . Tain't Two River no more'n it's Lunadilla or Stockton. . . ."

No one listened. . . . The waves continued to heave. . .

AS Eve Larch came up the stairs, she caught the reflection of her face in the mirror at the head of them and was shocked to see how tense and drawn she looked.

She shook her head sharply, removed her gloves, and, lifting her arms, fluffed her hair. Then she prepared a smile and entered the little upstairs parlor.

Jonathan Bricker sat in his chair in the bay-window. She had known he would be sitting there. He started to get up when he saw her, but she walked quickly over and put her hands on his shoulders, gently pressing him back into the chair.

Eve said, "It's been pretty bad?"

He did not answer.

"Jonathan," she said gently, "you—surely you guessed. People have known—all along, really. Lucy knew. I could tell she knew."

"I know that."

He sat up and stared out of the window, his bent back a heavy curve of misery.

"I don't know why it makes such a

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difference," he said. "It's a feeling you have. As long as you can——"

"I know. As long as you can pretend you don't know that anybody else knows."

"Guess that's it."

"It's all a little mad. Did you read it?"

"Yes. No more us than a couple of Eskimos. Only——" He floundered. Eve waited and after a moment she said, "Only what, Jon?"

He turned and stared at her, and all the peace and pleasure that had lived for so many years in this room were gone and both of them knew it.

"Things don't turn out the way they do in storybooks," he said. "All we could do now would be pack up and go off together."

"Yes," said Eve. And thought with alarm: I can't. I never thought of it before, but I know I can't.

But Jonathan said heavily, "She's got joint title to everything I own. And I'd have to leave the bank."

Because her whole life and training had been devoted to comforting and soothing the male, she could still give him her slow, unruffled smile.

"It's all right, Jon. Whatever you think."

"I think—I guess I'd better stay away for a while. Until—maybe the whole thing'll blow over, and ——"

He flushed and looked away from her. She knew he felt like a coward and rushed to comfort him.

"Don't think about it, Jon. I shan't mind. You couldn't do anything else . . ." and all the other little phrases to make his mind at ease, to make him feel like a man again. Her heart seemed to turn inside her with sorrow, for now he would not have her to do this for him. He would have only Lucy, shrill and cruel, finishing sentences for him, filling his days with the edge of her voice and laughter.

He went at last. Eve watched him go, and then turned back into the dim and fragrant room, and sat in her rocker, trying to think what she should do.

She had never been faced with the problem of what to do about anything, until now. Life had unfolded itself before her and she had accepted it as it came.

There had been Papa first. Papa, who liked to keep himself surrounded with lovely women; so his wife and daughters, even his sisters, had been lovely for him until Mother had died and Veronica had rebelled against sitting and being lovely and had run away.

EVE had not rebelled. It had been easy to sit in the charming little upstairs parlor playing the piano, or in the library reading or making fragile and useless lace. And because she had been considered a delicate child, it had been easy to feel that it was better not to swim or play tennis or go on picnics. Papa had hated red-faced, muscular women. She had only skated on Bottom River, and it was the skating that had brought Jonathan into the next part of her life.

He had come on to the ice one evening in February at the hour she always came — the time, just before dusk, when everyone else in Two River was eating or preparing to eat supper. She had remembered vaguely having seen him in town—he was the man Hiram Tucker had brought in to help at the bank—but he was different on the ice. His tremendous body was graceful, his movements easy and unself-conscious.

It was easy to please Jonathan — as it had been easy to please Papa. Easier, for his need seemed greater. They had skated together evening after evening, flying down the river as far as Lunadilla on days when the ice was good, coming home in the luminous dusk of winter.

The first time he had taken her to the deserted grist-mill — that had been natural too. She had never felt guilty or evil. Nor was it alien to her nature to keep the relationship secret from Papa. She had never told Papa anything that might disturb him.

After Papa died, it was natural for Jonathan to come to the house and sit in the big leather chair in the bay; natural for her to sit quietly near him, reading or making lace or softly talking.

Now she sat motionless in the little rocker. The effortless flow of her existence had been stopped with brutal abruptness.

She knew that if she had told Jonathan she would go away with him, and never mind his job or the lost possessions, he would have gone. Tears flowed up to her eyes, poured over her cheeks.

She wept silently, unable even to feel resentment. There was no one to blame. She could not blame Papa, for she knew that she could have escaped Papa as Veronica had done. She had not tried. And Jonathan had never asked her for anything she had not been ready to give before he asked. And his wife—poor dreadful Lucy! She could not blame Lucy, either . . .

She could not even blame this strange outside force that was shattering the globe of her existence. Things happened . . . you sought nothing, but waited . . . and things happened.

. . . . . .

In the kitchen at The Saddler's Janie Hauer took a quick look at the ham in the oven, put fresh ice water on the strips of potato that had been prepared for French frying, then wiped her hands and dug the book out of the curtained shelf below the sink where she had hidden it under the soup pot.

Her hands shook as she opened the book at the place where she had left a milk-bottle top for a marker. Then she began to read, hungrily, skipping all the pages except those which dealt with Jess and giving those the full intensity of her attention.

It didn't matter that in the book they called him Hank Nickerson instead of Jess Lubbock and that his girl there wasn't Janie Hauer. They had to change things around so people wouldn't guess. Nothing could have convinced her this wasn't Jess. Only, how had that woman known, the one that wrote the book? Just coming into town once in a while, the way she did, and no more than speaking to people in the street.

But this question did not really worry Janie. Somehow the woman had known. She must be the only one except Janie herself who knew that Jess's gallenness was really camouflage for youth and vulnerability; his rudeness a protection against wounds to his sensitive spirit.

She had to admit that she herself had not known this until she got the idea from the book. But she had felt it — and now the words seemed to enter her whole being — melting her into an almost unbearable tenderness for Jess.

When she came to the part where he had the fight with his father she had to close the book for a moment, gulping, striving to control her emotion. This was the way it was. No one understood him, no one saw him as she saw him. In the book even his girl didn't understand him, and his loneliness was more than Janie could bear.

She was sitting thus, her lower lip sucked under her teeth, her eyes dim, when she realised that Rosa stood over her. She got up, clutching the book to her chest. But Rosa's voice was not unkind.

"Watch your fire, Janie. It's most out. And it's time for them peas to go on."

"Okay." Janie put the book on the shelf with the spices, handling it clumsily. And then, just as clumsily she blurted out, "How did she know, Rosa? How could she know about — about —all of us?"

ROSA'S look was no longer kind. "You mean that book?" she said, and while she did not seem exactly angry there was a sudden tenseness about her that frightened Janie.

But Rosa said only, "Never heard a such a bunch-a foolishness. People so filled up with their own size they are themselves any place than look."

Janie stared, momentarily shaken. It couldn't be that all those chappers, all that lovely writing wasn't about Jess?

No. Stubbornly she turned away, refusing even to look at a face that held doubt. It was Jess. And she told herself that she would no longer be afraid to let him see how she felt about him. That was what he needed — you could tell from reading the book — love and understanding to break through his shell.

. . . . . .

The mid-October meeting of the Two River Junction Book and Thimble Club lacked its usual sprightliness.

The Thimble section managed as usual. Dolly Stillwell's needle flicked yarn in and out of the fabric of a needle-point chair seat. Liz Drumheller stolidly darned Lorkie's socks. In one corner the knitters gathered in a little group of their own, clicked needles through sweater-sleeves and bosoms. Pearl Miller, Two River's only ratter, poured lace out of her bobbin at the same unbelievable rate of speed that she had maintained for years.

The Book section, however, staggered and limped as at a fatal blow. May Anna Parker was not herself. Her buoyant bosom, her ringing contralto voice, were shrunken imitations of themselves.

To Two River, May Anna Parker and Culture were synonymous. Until she married old Lucius Parker (Petu Ferris had been known to claim he had caught him at one of the rare times when he was under the influence) and had brought the truth and light from Boston, Two River could not be said to have had culture — at least not with any style. Those who liked books had read them quietly and at home. Those who liked pictures bought cheap, garish prints. Those who liked flowers grew flowers, with no thought of garden clubs or arrangements.

May Anna had changed all that. She was an organiser, and she loved lifting and leading those about her towards the heights on which she herself lived. Most of Two River's ladies, dazzled by her city clothes and her elegant accent, had followed her, hypnotised, into the paths of book-club memberships, discussions of art, and a Choral Society. The old Wednesday Sewing Circle, founded by their grandmothers, had become the Book and Thimble Club.

But today May Anna had, for the moment, lost her force. She brought

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the meeting through its business portion, and it was then, usually, that she achieved her full stature. At this time she commented on the latest books copies of which she brought with her, and read reviews of them. She read articles on Art and Music and The Theatre; and occasionally — at least no oftener than twice a month — she could be induced to read her own Strolls in a Garden, which were then turned over for publication to the Lunadilla Weekly Gazette.

If the ladies of the Book and Thimble sometimes squirmed under this barrage of higher thinking, they said nothing, but bore May Anna as a not too galling cross and got in a few inches of knitting while it endured.

Today, however, was different. As the business meeting neared its end the busy fingers began to grow still. Unfinished garments were rolled into knitting bags, needle-point thrust out of sight, socks and darning-eggs dropped into mending baskets. Only Pearl Miller continued the steady rhythm of her tatting; all the others leaned forward in their chairs waiting.

Now Fern Ferris arose.

"Ladies!" she said. "As programme chairman of our little group, I have today a rare privilege."

She paused. The ladies shifted impatiently. If it wasn't May Anna putting on, it was Fern, with their rare privileges and I-ask-your-indulgences and that. But Fern, not to be done out of her moment, prolonged the pause as long as possible before she continued.

"For many years we have accepted literature and the creative arts as something of great interest to us all, but originating outside our little sphere. I know that there is not one among us but whom is as thrilled as I at the knowledge that we need no longer receive such blessings second-handed."

She smiled benignly upon the group, and if her smile rested for a moment longer upon May Anna than upon the ladies before her, it was barely noticeable. May Anna smiled back and flushed only slightly.

"Now," Fern went on, "Two River needs no longer to look to New York or Boston or Buffalo for its artists. We have one in our midst."

She laid a hand upon the copy of Summer Brave which was on the table beside her — a sheaf of newspaper clippings tucked inside, making its covers bulge.

Fern continued: "As always — the true artist is modest and reserved about talking about herself or her works." (Did the face of May Anna, reader-aloud of her Strolls grow redder? Her fixed smile did not change).

"All my efforts could not induce Miss Goodhand to appear before our little group. But our well-loved President — something of an artist herself" here Fern laughed gaily — "has consented to discuss this book and read the write-ups for us. Ladies, it is my privilege to re-introduce — our President!" And Fern, lifting her hands high before her, applauded loudly, nodding to the ladies as if to wake in them applause they might otherwise have neglected to give. Then, triumph setting the flowers on her hat a-tremble, she sat down.

Slowly May Anna arose. Her smile, usually firm and confident, was a pale imitation of itself. She lifted the book in a reluctant hand, opened it, and began to leaf through the clippings. In one last effort to regain the pedestal from which she was slipping, she began:

"May I read first a comment by John Richards, my father's old friend, who writes a column called 'Books' for the Boston Review—"

She looked up once, waveringly, into the merciless stare of the long-subdued Book and Thimble Club, then hastily looked down again and began to read.

* * * * * * *

The force which had been released in Two River began to take on an ugliness, almost visible. No one escaped untouched by the slime it left behind.

"So that's what you done with it!" Lem Miller, owner of Two River's funeral home, accused his wife Pearl. She stiffened in her chair, her black silks creaking.

"I don't know what you're talking about."

"You know, all right. I knew we never spent it all, the way we live with nothin' to show for it."

"Lem, you're crazy." Pearl said. But she looked afraid and he had never known her to look anything but firm and complacent.

"Oh, I know it ain't in a hole in the cellar, like that crazy nut in the book. Nobuddy but you'd have any way of knowin' where. I guess that writing woman don't even know you. Only it just come to me, readin' it, that's what you been up to all these years. Hidin' it away — for somebody to find when we're dead."

"Lem, you're crazy," she said again. The hands holding the tatting shook.

Sometimes a momentary sting exploded into laughter.

"It ain't right, like that night at Roxie's but it sure puts you in mind! If you could-a seen Luce Parker when the lights went on and we was all a-settin' there. . . ."

Dolly Stillwell, seated in Fern Ferris's parlor, sipped her tea occasionally and looked with concentration at her needle-point.

"Funny," she said, "the way she had the woman call it a boarding-house, wasn't it?"

Fern's face, which had long ago lost its triumph, was pinched and grey.

"How do you mean, funny?" she said, but her voice was not firm.

"Oh — just funny," Dolly said, smiling her thin smile. . . .

There came over people a strange, cowering quality. Old friends meeting on the street greeted one another in strained haste, staring anywhere but into each other's faces. Church boards were faced with abrupt, unexplained resignations. The habitues of the Saddler's drank quickly and alone, and left early. . . .

TWO miles beyond the bridge at Top River Gap, a little before dawn, George Hauer sat on a stump beside the road, a few yards from his overturned truck, smoking and waiting.

Two cars came by from the direction of Lunadilla, but both of them took on speed in response to his signals. This saddened, but did not surprise him. Eight miles of pitch-dark road from Two River and twenty from Lunadilla, there was nothing to do but wait.

When the gleam of headlights appeared heading towards Two River, he got up again, determined if not hopeful, and waved his hat. This time the battered car at which he waved rattled to a stop.

"Had a little trouble," George said. "Could I get a lift to—"

Suddenly the motor was switched off abruptly, and a voice from within the car called out belligerently, "This ain't a-gunta do you no good. Waitin' out here fer me."

George stuck his head in the window and peered. "Jess Fairbank! What you doin' out here at this hour?"

"Ain't none-a your business. Ain't none-a any-a you Hauerses business. A fella don't hafta have somebody dangin' onto him all the time."

Because George had never before heard Jess speak more than two short sentences at a time, he continued to hold his head inside the car and stare. He could see Jess' face only dimly but he got a good whiff of his breath.

"What's eatin' you, Jess? I took a load-a hay to Lunadilla and my truck hit a washed-out culvert and turned over and I got to get a lift some place. If you wants give me one, okay. If you don't, it ain't as if I ain't learned to wait."

"I'll take yuh as far's I'm goin'."

George opened his mouth to tell Jess specifically where he could put his grudging offer, meaning to return after that, with dignity, to his stump. Then, because the fumes of Jess' breath were strong and Jess was only nineteen and he had always half-liked the boy, he said nothing. He opened the door and got in.

Loudly, shattering the miles of silence that surrounded them, the car roared into action. They rode without speaking until Jess blurted, "A fella needs to be left alone."

"That's right."

Again there was silence, except for the noise of the car. George slid a look at the pale blob of Jess' face, but it was turned grimly ahead. At length Jess spoke again, each speech bursting from him as if it had been dammed back beyond endurance.

"It use-ta be she had some sense."

George thought this over for a time. It began to come to him that they might be talking about his daughter Janie. With careful casualness he said, "What changed 'er?"

"Some crazy book."

Again George waited, feeling that this was no time to push Jess. And he was right, for after a time Jess was relieved, unaided, of another outburst.

"Says nobuddy understands me. Nobuddy but her. I'm sensitive and that. She wants—" Jess stopped abruptly, apparently remembering that the man next to him was Janie's father. "I dunno what she wants," he mumbled, and George did not press him.

They rode on for another mile. Then Jess burst out again.

"What if you're mindin' your own business and figure maybe to get married some day when you're a mind to but mostly just want to mind your own business? And then they go at you that nobody understands you and you're a quiet kind of a fella because you're ——" Even in his drunkenness Jess paused and shook his head with horror. "They say you're that way because you're hurt inside. And they throw themselves at you because you're hurt and sensitive and you need somebody to understand you. And you got to be careful not to park any place out in the country. You, not her, got to make her go right home after the movie."

Curse it all, thought George. And Jess had liked the girl, too. If she'd just of give him a little time, but no. Reading that fool book and using it for an excuse to start driving the poor kid off his nut. Women, he thought with disgust, never letting things be, but always at you, and even when they got what they wanted, looking for something else to be always at you about.

He realised that the truck was stopping. He was almost home.

"Well," Jess said hastily, "I'll be seein' ya, George. You want me to tell Corley about the truck, or—"

"Cut it out!" George said angrily. "You're comin' down for coffee. She's asleep. And besides, there ain't nothin' she c'n do in broad daylight with her Ma an' me right there."

They circled the house to the back porch. There was no light within. Then

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the kitchen door behind them was flung open and they heard a joyful cry.

"Jess! Oh, Jess! It's you!"

Both men became motionless. They did not look at each other or behind them as Janie came out to them.

"I knew you hadn't really forgotten our date. You were with Daddy all the time! Oh, Jess!"

Jess said nothing whatever for a time, nor did he move. Then his young, sullen face crumpled completely, and, sitting down on the top step, he burst into tears.

"Jess!" said Janie—the wonder and joy in her voice at this display of emotion, making it tremble. "Oh, don't, Jess! It's all right!"

George stared at her. Then, beaten for the moment by forces stronger than himself, he sagged against the porch pillar and swore.

PEARL MILLER sat with her tatting in the kitchen. Her fingers moved as always, darting in and out with the same invisible speed, and the lace flowed from them. But her face was strained, haggard, and at this moment tense with listening.

He's in the attic now, she thought. He won't find it, I know he won't find it, but what am I going to do? He'll always be watching me and he'll never believe me again. I can't live with him watching me all the time and looking at me worse than as if I was a—a—

Even her mind refused to use the word. How can I be thinking such things, she thought, and her face grew red and her head began to tremble. But the thread continued to flow smoothly through her fingers as if they belonged to a different being. I didn't spend it, she thought; never a penny of it, just saved it so we'd have it for when we're old.

But she'd never give it up. She knew if they were old and starving she couldn't bear to take it out, the lovely money she'd kept so safe for all these years. Always she'd been saving it for a time when they needed it more, but really she saved it because she loved it, because it made her feel good just to look at it, to touch it, the lovely green nest of it tucked away where she could take it out whenever she liked but he would never, never find it.

Oh no! she thought, and tears of self-pity and helplessness began to flow down her mottled face. It was for us, both of us if we needed it. He's got no right to look at me as if . . . I never done nothing wrong. Look at the likes of Evie Larch, and he probably don't think nothing of that. . . . I took care of the place, that's all, and watched that nobody wasted the lights, and I collected bills he wouldn't have thought of, even . . . and I never sat in the parlor, not once.

There's not a place on the rug that's worn off. It looks like the day we bought it . . . and I helped with the embalming, he never had to hire nobody, and I always set a good table, only not wasteful . . . If you come to think of it I earned it, every penny. If you count what others throw away . . . He's in the spare room now and I can't stand him looking at me any more. . . .

The tears poured now and her mouth stretched into a painful grimace of weeping. How had this thing which had always been her secret virtue, her pride, the reason for her looking with condescension upon other women been twisted by her husband into a sin? She could not adjust herself to this sudden reversal of the certainties of her life. She could only weep helplessly, thinking in terror of her husband searching, with anger and hatred, and the secret, the dear secret that she could not bear to give up.

At last even the tatting dropped from her hands. The bobbin, unregarded, bounced under the stove. She covered her twisted face and the weeping broke into tortured, wailing sobs.

. . . . . .

Old John Cartwright, always the last to leave, gave a final look at the cherry chest which was his work in progress, made a delicate stroke with a brushful of shellac, and then began to put away his equipment. Amos, at his drawing-board, watched him potter about with brushes and tools and, finally, push his arms into his shabby coat.

"Think it'll be okay," John said. "Don't know how they'll take to it in cherry. Folks get set ideas. But it's a nice piece of work."

"Thanks, John."

After the old man had gone, Amos sat for some time making marks on the drawing-paper before him. He thought about John Cartwright, and Les Hardy, and Dutch Fenstermacher. All expert cabinet-makers; all, ten years ago, piecing out an existence by doing heavy carpentry work, plumbing, masonry, any odd jobs they could find.

Probably, he thought, there were towns all over the country like Two River Junction. Towns once thriving and prosperous but now, through changes effected by automobiles, shipping, and railroad lines, left off the beaten track. In such spots the old skills and crafts had survived a full generation longer than anywhere else, but even there they would soon be lost forever.

But not in Two River, he thought; not, at least, in the field of cabinet-making. Dutch Fenstermacher, the last of a long line of wood-workers, now had a nephew working at the bench beside him. Two of John Cartwright's grandsons had left the cotton mills in Lunadilla last summer and were working as apprentices under John. And slowly, they were beginning to make money.

Amos had a responsibility towards all of them. But he couldn't kid himself, he thought grimly. Faith, by a gesture, could have made him forget any responsibility he might have felt towards the men who worked with him. And rightly, he thought. Les and John and the others had run their lives adequately before he came along, and could do so again.

Yet the emotions involved with his River Valley Enterprises went deeper than his feeling towards his workers. River Valley was his child, his reason for being. The chests, the tables and chairs — graceful, almost delicate in line, yet practically indestructible — which left the old grain mill, carefully crated, as rapidly as they were finished, first came to life on his own drawing-board. He knew that they were good. He knew too that they were born, somehow, of Two River.

In theory, his was a business that he could start anywhere at all, but he knew it was not. His roots were in Two River and his creative energy grew out of those roots. The woods he used were local woods that he had handled and carved and whittled since childhood; his eye for line, for simplicity without self-conscious starkness, grew out of his life in this curious, isolated village.

He had no illusions about Two River and had had none when he decided to come home to stay. It was a vicious town, he knew, and a kind one; vindictive and generous; spiteful and pitifully vulnerable. These were human qualities and would apply, he thought, to most towns.

But there was something extra about Two River — the something extra that, for him, swung the balance. It had guts. Other towns, cut off by changing times from the sources of their prosperity, withered and died — became decadent ghosts, or charming museums of the past, catering to tourists, self-consciously quaint.

Two River Junction, deprived of its cheap transporation by the ending of the canals, deprived of markets for its huge crops of grain and hay by the replacement of horses with automobiles, had staggered for a time and nearly fallen. Then, with peasant stubbornness, it had pulled itself together.

The fields that had produced grain and hay for shipment had been turned over to dairy cattle. Men who had worked in the grain mill and brick-yard had found work on the dairy farms, or had started small lumbering projects or even smaller shops or factories. Two River had worked harder than in its prosperous days and it had never been rich again. But it was no ghost; it was vigorously alive.

If only he could make Faith see this; make her know that the things she loved and needed were here, if she could wait long enough to find them. But his emotions were none too clear even to himself; there was no hope of putting them into words.

He could not even say he loved Two River. It was not that at all, any more than he could say he loved his hand or arm. Two River was part of him.

He moved away from his drawing-board and looked out of the window, his clenched hands pushed deep into his pockets.

Faith must not be frightened away. Grimly he thought of what the past days must have been for her. Yet this was her place, he was certain. If a town had been especially made for her longing, her talent, and her need, it would have been just like Two River Junction.

Restless, he turned away from the window. He ignored the drawing-board and the pear-wood panels stacked beside it, and took down his coat.

He walked to the post-office and approached Rosa's window briskly, with what he hoped was a matter-of-fact air.

"Faith Goodbind's mail, please, Rosa," he said.

WHEN he said Faith's name, the look Rosa gave him held sullen resentment—and fear as well, Amos thought. She took the letters from the pigeonhole and handed them to him without comment. But he felt her stare buring into his back as he left.

He ignored it, also the other looks that were turned upon him as he walked out of town in the direction of the brick-yard. When he reached Faith's doorstep he stopped. Always he had run up the steps and, after knocking lightly, put his head in the door and called. Now he walked slowly up on to the porch and stood before the door for a moment. He knocked.

There was no answer; no sound, even of a movement, from inside. Yet he knew she was there.

He knocked again; then said "Faith" softly, for he knew she could hear him. But there was no sound at all. He felt his throat grow tight, and suddenly leaned his body against the door and struck it lightly with his open palm.

"Faith — open the door" he said.

But there was no sound.

He pushed his face against the cracked paint of the door until he could feel its rough edges cut into his skin. As his hand slid down the

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door panel it reached the knob; automatically the brass oval slipped into his palm. She was there, he was certain; on the other side of the door—not moving, close enough to hear him close enough.

He stood so for a long time. Then he moved back from the door, dropped the letters on the porch, and went away.

Joseph Stafford gave the order for Hampton's lunch and his own and cheerfully reflected that Hampton could lunch like a gourmet from cocktail to brandy and the expense account would bear it with joy. Hampton, you are wonderful, he thought; vain and fat, even pompous, but I love you at this moment with unbridled affection. What he said aloud; as he leaned back was "Well, Hampton—"

"How are you, my boy?" Hampton asked.

"Bright as a bee. As you could imagine. Like to see these?"

He tossed a sheaf of orders on the table.

Hampton glanced at the top one "My dear boy, I'm delighted for you. I'm delighted for Carson. However, if 'Summer' never sold a copy I'd speak as I've spoken and write as I've written."

Stafford retrieved the orders cheerfully, thinking: Hampton, you are without thaw. For he knew that if "Summer Brave" had not begun to sell by now Hampton would be incensed; he had chosen it, therefore it would be the chosen of thousands.

He took his glass and stared appreciatively into its depths. "To Two River Junction. I can't honestly say any more whether I like the town in 'Summer' or the Two River Junction you've given us. In fact, I get them confused."

He turned the stem of the glass slowly in his fingers and said, casually, "We really ought to go up again. The two of us. An Old Boys' Week."

"But I've been up again," Hampton said. "Several times."

The glass stopped turning in Stafford's fingers. He sat quite still and said, after a moment, "Well—I didn't know."

"Of course, I've been up again. One could hardly do a thorough job based on a three-day observation."

Stafford let that go. He knew that Hampton had done a thorough job before this based on a good hour's observation. He felt alert and wary.

He said, "Why, no—I suppose not. I wasn't thinking. And how is Miss Goodbind?"

"I've scarcely seen her. Passed her in the street once. It's the town I've been working on."

It's the town he's been working on, thought Stafford. That nice long main street, all of three-quarters of a mile, and that confusion of hotels and inns and hot spots, that absolute riot of activity around the post office. What is he after?

"You should have let me know," he said. "I might've gone along."

"My dear boy! I hadn't a notion! Publishers — after all. With everything under way and the book absolutely swimming and the writer not demanding anything — I hadn't the faintest notion you'd want to see Miss Goodbind."

"Oh, not just Miss Goodbind. Two River Junction. I was fascinated by it. Or you've fascinated me — I scarcely know which."

"Why, I'm delighted. I shall certainly give you a ring if I go up again."

"Thanks, Hampton! And I'll call you if I go up."

Simultaneously they lifted their glasses and looked at each other warily across the table.

. . . . . .

Eve paused at the top of the stairs beside the marble-topped table in the upper hall, put her hat on the table and walked into the upstairs parlor.

She stopped in the doorway and reached a hand towards the wall for support. For in the chair opposite the piano—in Jonathan's chair. Papa's chair—sat Pearl Miller.

Eve thought she would be sick. For days now, there had been growing within her a feeling that now seemed ready to engulf her. It was the feeling that she was going to be punished for her sins, but by people, not by God. There had been sly glances and whispers as she went along the street and now the obscenity of Pearl Miller seated in the place that was Jonathan's!

Pearl had always revolted her, even when they were children. The unhealthy skin with features handled loosely into it; her secret, dreadful little vices. Pearl had always brought the best lunch to school, for her mother had been a famous baker; but she had eaten only the sandwiches and sold the exquisite little tarts, the cakes. She had never spent any of the money but had kept it with her, playing with it secretly at her desk, carrying it about with her tied in her handkerchief.

More than once she had been found with a group of children, holding them bound in terror, telling them about the Thing that would come and get them in the dark.

PEARL had a passion for disaster. Whenever anything dreadful happened, somehow Pearl had been there. When Georgie Hauer had fallen from the top of the Drumheller's barn; when drunken old Barney Hart's house had burned, with Barney trapped in the bedroom, his screams had thrown all within hearing distance into sick horror—all but Pearl.

(. . . Is he dead? Is he dead yet? They won't get him out, will they? . . . Is Georgie's leg broke, Mis' Hauer? . . . They'll have to cut it off I guess, won't they?)

Now Eve stared at Pearl and felt that she could not bear to have her here in the small parlor which of all the rooms in the house was most intimately her own.

"What do you want, Pearl?"

But Pearl could not speak. Eve saw that she was weeping violently though with little noise. Eve thought stonily: There is something that can move even Pearl. What can it be?

"Oh, Evie. . . ." She began to gulp and her sobbing was interspersed with coughs. ". . . I never done nothing wrong . . . not like . . . I mean, I meant all of it for his own good. It ain't as if I took it . . . only I can't stand it no more, the way he keeps looking, as if — as if —"

She broke down again, and Eve, after watching her for a moment, turned her back because she could no longer bear to look at her. She went to the table in the corner and lit the burner under the tea-kettle she kept in this parlor.

"It's that — that woman!" Pearl burst out, at last. "Writing that book! He never would of got such a notion if it wouldn't of been for that."

Eve's hands, moving among the things on the tea-tray became still. So she and Pearl were, after all, caught in the same net. A sense of helplessness, so complete that it affected her body as well as her mind, depressed her. She felt no pity for Pearl, but some of her revulsion had been replaced by the attitude one animal might hold for another if they were both caught in the same trap.

"You'd better tell me why you came here, Pearl," she said.

"Oh, Evie, I—!" Another wave of weeping overcame her, and Eve turned back to the humming kettle. The water began to boil and she poured it over the tea.

"Evie—" Since Pearl seemed to manage better if Eve didn't look at her, Eve decided to keep her back turned until she got out whatever it was she was struggling to say. She stirred the tea-leaves and sliced a lemon, arranged and re-arranged the cups and saucers, but all the time she was listening to Pearl.

"I saved it for him, that was all. What would we of spent it for? Notnin' . . . It'd all be gone and nothin' to show for it . . ."

So that's it, Eve thought. She's never stopped at all. . . . The pennies tied up in her handkerchief. . . . Now that I think, I never saw her spend one . . . not ever one single penny.

"I know I haven't done nothing wrong, Evie, only I can't stand it any more, him looking all through the house, and he hardly don't speak to me, and he looks . . . oh, Evie . . ." again the voice trailed off into a smothered wail.

Eve said nothing. She waited.

When Pearl began to speak again, her voice had changed. Its quality of hysteria was gone.

"The way I thought was—if I could show him I meant it all along for his good. . . . You know that's how I meant it, Evie, only I just didn't get around to telling him. . . . Evie!" The voice increased in intensity.

"He always liked this house, Evie. I ain't gunta be cheap and make out it ain't just perfect for the business, because it is. With them double parlors downstairs and this little setting-room upstairs for, when you need it kind of intimate and private like — you know how it is sometimes—"

The teapot Eve held crashed on to the tea-table. The cups overturned, the tea began to run across the table and drip on to the floor. But Eve could not move. She was held in a paralysis of horror.

Pearl did not notice, and even the crash of the teapot stopped her only momentarily.

"I ain't gunta naggle, Evie. I'll give it all to you. Everything but what it would take to install the equipment and that . . ."

Eve turned towards her. She stared in fascination: the expectant, greedy eyes; the hands moving about in the depths of the bag that held the eternal tatting. As Eve watched, the hands became still for a moment, then slowly Pearl brought them out of the bottom of the bag. They were filled with money.

That's where she hid it, Eve thought. Where she could always see it and touch it. Lem would have guessed if he had remembered the handkerchief with her pennies in it, at school.

"You wouldn't think it would you," Pearl said, looking down at it with pride, with love. "Just saving a little here and there. And bills Lem never even knew I collected they wouldn't of been paid at all . . . He never would of guessed if it wouldn't of been —" Again her voice threatened to go out of control; but she swallowed and pushed the money towards Eve.

"It's fifteen thousand, Evie. You won't never get such an offer again."

For a moment Eve thought her own voice had been lost in the depths of her tight aching throat. She rested

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her hands behind her on the soaking tea table and breathed deeply.

"Get out of this house," she whispered.

Pearl stared without comprehension. Then she looked at the money in her hands, and again made a gesture with it towards Eve, as if there were no words needed.

She can't believe it, thought Eve. The wonderful sense of power she must have had, carrying it around with her always and thinking she could buy any of us . . .

PEARL got slowly to her feet. Shaking, she pushed the money back into her bag and clumsily drew the strings tight. Her dough-colored face, swollen with weeping, began to turn a mottled purple.

"My money ain't good enough for Miss Evie Larch," she said. "And this house is too good for our kind of a business. It was good enough for your Pa, with his high and mighty ideas. Miss Evie Larch, lookin' down at the rest of us as if we was dirt, bringin' in—"

"Get out!"

"Oh, I'm a-going. I haven't got no desire whatsoever to remain." She moved towards the door and then turned and said with deliberation: "I might of been wrong, at that. Lem hardly wouldn't care for it. In our business you got to be careful."

Eve listened to the heavy footsteps descend the stairs, go through the downstairs hall, until the closing of the front door put an end to them. Looking about the little room, she felt old and very tired. And she knew that never again would this room be the same.

. . . . . .

The Two River Book and Thimble Club had shrunk to a nervous, hag-ridden shadow of itself. Most of its members had deserted it utterly. Those who still attended gave each other furtive glances, stared mostly at the work in their hands as if clinging to the one thing that would not betray them.

Bravely May Anna's voice soared forth over the almost empty meeting-room; desperately she clutched at any shred of attention or interest. But the looks she received were withdrawn, excluding her.

"... as ... es, walking through my garden," May Anna's voice said. "I think Life itself is not unlike an old-fashioned New England garden. Here the baby's breath, the delicate, protected fern and flower; here the annual, springing forth each June only to die in November; here, too, the hardy perennial . . ."

She had reached the point two weeks ago where she did not attempt to look at her audience; it was too discouraging. She stared at a point on the opposite wall . . .

". . . So we, too, must fill out the daily routine of our lives, however much charm it may hold of itself, with fresh interests planted, like the lovely annual, every year. So certain parts of our life are protected, held aloof from the glaring sun of exposure . . ."

She stumbled on to the end. There was neither applause nor comment. She was certain no woman in the room could repeat, if asked, a word she had said. There was no gathering of admirers to offer congratulations and say, "I don't know how you think them things up, May Anna. Land knows, I could work in the garden for fifty years and think mostly about weeds and manure."

They had endured her in silence. Now in silence they began to stuff their knitting and darning and fancywork into various receptacles and prepare for departure. Separately and almost silently they left, no one offering to share the pleasure of May Anna's company on the way home.

She watched them grimly, and grimly gathered up her papers in preparation for her own departure. The complete loss of her kingdom was not coming easily to May Anna. There must be a way of fighting to hold it, but she had not discovered it.

That evening at dinner ("supper" to the rest of Two River, but dinner and with candles in the Parker household), she stared resentfully at her husband. Long ago she had stuffed into the dimmest corner of her subconscious the knowledge that she had snatched at Lucius Parker as at a life belt, thus rescuing herself from the dead sea of spinsterhood and genteel poverty.

For such a long time she had lived with the self-created picture of herself as a creature of aristocratic background and delicate upbringing who had, in her ignorance, been swept away by a doting importunate stranger and dragged to this backward province filled with near-savages (for whose minds and souls she did her best) that the picture had become more real than the reality.

And was any of her sacrifice gratefully received? May Anna almost wept with anger and self-pity. Lucius himself—he who had taken her away from all that was gentle and beautiful—spent his evenings in the stuffy little room he called his office (the only part of the house he had flatly refused to have done over) or at saloons, or goodness knew where else. He was like all the rest of Two River Junction—excluding her, ignoring her.

Suddenly she could not bear it.

"What's the good of your being a lawyer?" she demanded. "Something could be done to that Goodbind woman. Couldn't she be sued for libel?"

Lucius dropped his paper and, resting his elbows on the arms of his chair, placed the tips of his fingers together.

"Who's she libelled?" he asked crisply.

"Why—good heavens! Everybody in town, from what I hear."

"Like who? Name me one."

Lucius's attention was now completely hers. The taut feeling within May Anna began to relax a little. That was all it took. She could bear dislike or ridicule or enmity but she could not bear to be ignored.

She said, "You should know the—the absolutely abandoned manner in which the woman has pried into people's lives and spread the most dreadful intimacies all over that—that cheap, sensational—"

"How'd she do it? She's been out at Pappy Wicomber's place a year, hasn't she? Far's I know, there's not three people in town she knows more than just to speak to."

"She sees enough of Amos Tucker."

"Amos. Huh. He'd have had to start mighty young to collect all the gossip that's supposed to be in that book."

"She got it somewhere."

"Did she? Well, suppose we allow that I don't, but suppose we do, just for argument. Who's going to stand forth and say, 'That tale in that book isn't about me a-tall'? Or, 'The night Roxie Drumheller's place caught fire it wasn't me they carried out in the wash-basket.' Who'd do that, May Anna?"

"You're a lawyer, aren't you? People having to sue for such a thing shouldn't have to put it like that, if they've got good lawyers."

"That's what it amounts to. You can word it differently, but it amounts to that. And you know and I know and everybody else knows, when they face it, that that girl didn't write about folks in Two River a-tall. People are people, only in a small town more so. She wrote about people. And everybody was ready to see themselves in what she wrote — or, more likely, see somebody else."

Having thus delivered himself, Lucius retired to his newspaper. May Anna saw his attention removed from her, and there was a revival of her feeling of desperation. She could not bear it—she had to act in some fashion. The feeling coiled and stirred within her. She could not sit still.

She went to her desk, hoping to find letters she must write, notes she must make which would distract her. On top of a pile of papers was her copy of "Summer Brave."

At the sight of it the feeling rose in her throat until it choked. Angrily she flipped back the book's cover; it opened at the title-page.

Suddenly she began to feel the old excitement that came to her when she thought of a plan. She got out blank writing-paper and her fountain pen. Her face flushed, her eyes grew bright.

She wrote carefully in a script copied with intensive practice from an old advertisement featuring distinctive handwriting. Only this time she was careful to make it legible.

"Redfield and Carson," she wrote. "Madison Avenue, New York, N. Y. Gentlemen: . . ."

. . . . . .

Two River Junction, caught in the toils of its private monster, hardly realised that it was becoming a legend.

The legend of Faith Goodbind, of "Summer Brave," and of Two River Junction, came into being almost as a unit, the three were so closely identified with one another in the minds of the public.

Many of Joe Stafford's hunches on "Summer Brave" had been sound; among the soundest was his insistence on careful, unsensational publicity. Here was a book, he had felt from the first, that people were going to like to think they had discovered for themselves.

This was true. File-clerks and bus-drivers and schoolteachers began to read it and recommend it with the same sense of discovery and of something more. Possession? Participation?

Imperceptibly Two River Junction began first to be associated with the book and then, in people's minds, to be a part of it. Barclay Hampton was responsible for this. If Stafford, who had seen the real Two River, found it merging in his mind with the fictional village in "Summer Brave," the public, with no check on its imagination, found them one.

HAMPTON, through his syndicated column and his weekly half-hour on the radio, gave Two River Junction to the American public. His spell was so expertly woven that when a reader thought back on the story it was along Two River's mist-filled streets that Faith Goodbind's characters walked. The next step was that the reader wanted to see it.

Stafford realised what was about to happen. He knew from the letters piling up on his desk: ". . . appreciate directions for reaching Two River Junction, as we could not find it on any road map . . ." ". . . would like to return and satisfy myself this is the town I visited by boat in the summer of '97 . . ." ". . . can't believe it exists in our generation but would like to see for myself . . ."

Stafford looked at the pile of letters and thought of the larger piles, addressed directly to Faith Goodbind, which had been forwarded to her.

This was it. All of Redfield and

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Carson was in that state of excitement known to publishers who have on their hands a possible runaway. Stafford himself was the fair-haired boy. Even Carse spoke to him with a note of deference, and old Redfield was threatening to leave his late Norman castle in Connecticut to preside at a dinner—a thing he had not done since R. & C. had launched, ten years before, the Hartley "Notes and Confessions."

We've done it, Stafford thought; we're set. All his planning and thinking for months, in and out of the office, had been aimed at bringing about exactly this state of affairs.

Yet now, between himself and the pure enjoyment of his triumph, stood his mental image of Faith Goodbind—her look of withholding, of almost desperate reticence.

He tried to shake himself free of his sense of—what? Not guilt, certainly. She had written her book and presumably had wanted to sell it, or she wouldn't have sent it to a publishing house. The sales campaign had been unsensational, the author scarcely mentioned.

Yet her face haunted him—physically as well as mentally—for Bronsky had got the one good photograph he had hoped for and it now hung, twice as large as life, on the wall opposite Stafford's desk, a symbol of his triumph.

Stafford looked from the photograph to the stack of letters. Then he took up one that had been put aside and glanced over it again: ". . . that someone must protest in behalf of a simple, kindly people too humble to defend themselves. I am sure there are laws of libel or slander covering such outrageous violation of the privacy of . . ."

Anonymous, of course. Two River postmark. Crackpot—there was always somebody.

Still, he thought, he ought to look into it. A girl like that, not used to this sort of thing. Might throw her into a panic. He could not, in reality, imagine Faith Goodbind in a panic. But he ignored this thought.

He swept the letters into a pile and went into Carson's office. There he slid them on to the desk so that they fanned across it, covering most of its surface. He handed him the one he had with held.

"Thought I should take another run up," he said.

Carson looked up at him, then at the mass of letters. He barely glanced at the one charging libel and slander. He said nothing, but glanced first at Stafford, then out of the window, a look of bleak amusement on his face. Stafford was uncomfortable and irritated with himself for being so.

"I'll give Hampton a ring," he said and thought his voice sounded lame. "Time we lured him up again — keep his interest aroused." He did not add that he knew Hampton had been up already, and that the luring was not being done by Redfield and Carson.

Carson gave him a baffling look, and said, "Go ahead, son."

With dignity, Stafford gathered the letters and returned to his own office. There, before his thoughts had time to become any more confused than they were, he began to be very brisk. He pushed the letters into a brief-case along with a large envelope of press notices; he gave a list of instructions to his secretary; he concentrated for some time on a road map, not admitting to himself that he knew the road quite well. Then he asked his secretary to get Barclay Hampton on the telephone.

He took the instrument himself as soon as she had dialed the number. He could hear the ring go on for some moments before he heard the voice of Hampton's discreet ex-barber.

"Mr. Hampton is out of town . . . No, he did not say."

Slowly Stafford replaced the telephone. Out of town. He leaned back in his chair. We were going to call each other up were we? Next time we'd go together. . . Out of town. The old so-and-so. . . . Could it possibly be Faith? He didn't think so. . . . But there was something there, all right, and it wasn't the scenery. . . .

Well, Well. . . . He grinned to himself, then pulled the zipper to close his brief-case, took up the road map and left.

. . . . . .

Mr. Hampton, who had met Eve at The Saddler's, walked home with her. She hardly noticed him but knew, vaguely, that he walked at her side; also, that he had contrived to do this before.

When they reached her door she turned and, because she had not been gracious to him, said, "Come in, won't you?"

He accepted at once, and she took him to the upstairs parlor. When she looked about her, at the place where Pearl Miller had sat, she knew again that the room would never be as it had been.

It's not the room, she thought; it's me.

EVE had almost forgotten Hampton, and when she turned from putting off her coat she was startled. He's like Papa, she thought. But of course he was not. Papa had been tall, supple as a willow switch, different altogether.

Yet there was something there. The way he suddenly fitted into the room, became a part of it (Jonathan had always moved awkwardly about its fragile elegance); his look of ease, almost of possession; his manner as he moved towards the beautiful little fireplace.

"What a charming house, Miss Larch. You've lived here always?"

"I was born here."

He gazed at her with such obvious admiration that she might have been embarrassed if she had not been, at that moment, indifferent to everything outside her own secret emotions. But because certain gestures were automatic with her, she said, "Would you like tea?"

"I should be delighted."

She went about the task. Handling the tea things, seeing the cup that had chipped when she dropped it, catching the scent of the sliced lemon, brought Pearl back into the room. She'll never be gone, Eve thought, heavily.

She turned back to Mr. Hampton and, though she could not think why he had come, was glad he was there. She began to make conversation with the ease and charm that were hers without effort. Mr. Hampton responded with interest. His eyes fairly gleamed as he looked about the room, and at her.

"It's miraculous," he said, still talking of her house, "that it's never been spoiled or tampered with. Do you live here alone?"

She gave him his tea and brought forward the little table so that he could reach the sugar and lemon and biscuits. Then she sat back in her own chair and looked at him. She did not know why she answered as she did. To torture herself or this odd little man? To see shock in someone's face beside her own? She did not know.

She said slowly, with little pauses, "I am in — theory — the heroine of the scene in the hay-barn in Miss Goodbind's book."

Hampton set his teacup on the table. "What is going on in this town! I've felt there was — but what an unbearable situation for you. You must get out of it!"

"Must I?" How could he know that she was trapped, trapped in this house with the ghost of Pearl Miller.

"Of course," he said. "Come away for a time. Come to New York! Have you ever been there?"

"No."

"Delightful! Then you must. I've a tremendous house with nobody in it. I'll have my sister come down from Connecticut. My dear child, you must come."

She stared at him and thought, Why, I believe he's courting me. It seemed impossible and she gave him a look composed, of amusement and gratitude.

But she knew that there was an odd quality in his courtship. She had seen a look such as his face wore now. On the face of that man from the museum who had found his way to her house and let his glance fall upon Grandfather Larch's sherry decanter.

Then she thought, for the first time, But Papa looked like that too. That's what Mamma and I were—collector's pieces; perfect, preserved without flaw.

She rose and walked to the window, and stood looking out at the grey sky, the whipping gusts of snow that rested nowhere but swirled about as the wind took them.

This was the way things happened. She waited, she did nothing, and life opened before her as she went along, always another page turned without effort on her part. A page was turning now; she could go to New York with this man, she could escape everything — Jonathan and Lucy, Pearl Miller. He might even marry me, she thought, for I am indeed a rare piece and particularly well preserved.

What was different? She did not know. She thought again, It is I that am changed; nothing else.

Yet on the surface she was the same. She could turn a gently smiling face upon him and say, "How very kind. But I'm really quite all right. We're all in the same boat, you see."

As she looked at him she realised, with wry amusement, that her whole point of view was becoming colored. Because he was not of Two River Junction, because he was completely removed from the agony Two River was enduring, he seemed as protected and innocent as a child. And kindly, as to a child, she spoke to him.

"Two River's an old town. Its families haven't changed much in the past few generations. Everybody knows everybody else, as in all small towns. And when the town closet, so to speak, is thrown open and all the skeletons tumbled out at once, there aren't many who can refuse to claim at least one of them."

"But how"—he set his cup down—"how did this — this ridiculous situation start? This identification with the book? It's so completely absurd. Miss Goodbind's manuscript was sent out before—"

"I know. It is absurd. I think someone started it."

Both of them sat silent for a time, ignoring the tea. Then she said, "Someone began it. And that's what happened."

"But surely — it must have occurred to someone that these things could have happened anywhere. It didn't have to be Two River Junction."

"I think it occurred to everybody. To all of us — after the first shock. Yet the thing kept growing — almost as if — as if—"

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She searched for words. Then, helpless, tried to explain.

"It was as if all these things that had been whispered about had to be brought out, exposed. Like — like the people you read of who go through a sort of mass orgy and torture themselves or rush into the ocean to cleanse themselves of their sins . . ."

How queer, she thought. It's only as I talk about it that I see it so myself. . . . Pearl Miller holding the money out, yet Pearl didn't have to tell anyone . . . and me . . . telling this man about Jonathan and myself . . .

She leaned forward to refill his cup and then stopped, the teapot poised over the cup. There was a noise on the stair, and then Jonathan's voice called "Eve!" at the door as he rapped lightly.

She sat motionless for a moment. Then calmly she filled the cup, put down the teapot, and went to let him in. She introduced the two men and, with the same sense of distant amusement, she saw that beneath his smooth polish Mr. Hampton was the more embarrassed of the two.

However, Mr. Hampton had poise. He finished his cup of tea, making cheerful small talk as he did so. But when he left there was the barest touch of haste in his good-bye and he had not mentioned New York again.

Eve stood for a moment with the door open, watching his neatly tailored back. Probably, she thought gently, the last suitor, or possible suitor, I shall ever have. Then she turned smiling to Jonathan.

. . . . . .

Faith Goodbind looked for a long time at the letter and the cheque.

". . . The usual practice is to calculate royalties and to mail cheques semi-annually. However, in view of the mounting file of orders and other encouraging indications, I feel it safe to say our confidence in Summer Brave is being fully justified and the enclosed cheque . . ."

It was a large cheque. She had not known exactly what to expect from her writing. She had hoped she could earn her living by it, for it was the thing she wanted most to do. She knew nothing at first hand about what writing could earn, but had the vague knowledge that some people made fabulous sums at it and others came close to starving.

So she held the cheque, thinking. It was not fabulous but, living as she did, it could keep her for several years. It gave her a sense of solidity that she had never had. The walls of the little house seemed more firm, the house itself rested more securely in the meadow. It was hers; and maybe —maybe she could keep it, perhaps live here always . . .

She stood up. She must take the cheque to the village and deposit it, she thought; and forced herself to face something which she had been trying to ignore.

She had not gone to the village for three days. Yesterday, when she had seen Amos coming down the road, she had closed her door and stood behind it, answering neither his knock nor his call, until at last he had dropped the mail and gone away.

Something had happened — something strange, even horrible. She did not know what it was and there was no way of finding out for the shreds of it were intangible, darting briefly into light and disappearing. It disturbed her because there was comfort in it and because it threatened this new, sweet emotion, this sense of permanence which she was beginning to value so highly.

But hiding in the house was no good. She should have gone in days ago for mail. Now this cheque gave an excuse for her to force herself out of the house, into the village, to face—whatever it was.

She closed the windows against possible rain and locked the doors—an act she performed so seldom that it took her five minutes to find the key. She could think of nothing else to keep her. So at last, her face pale under the tan, she turned towards the village and began her walk.

. . . . . .

After Hampton had left Eve's house, Jonathan stood by the piano for a time and looked at her. His face was desperate and very tired.

"Eve," he said, but seemed unable to go on.

They had not seen each other for weeks. Looking at him, she began to tremble. At last she smiled and, as if no time had passed, as if nothing had happened to them at all, went to him and kissed him. She pushed him lightly towards his chair (Pearl's chair) and went to the cellaret for whisky.

He took the glass from her, but set it on the table without drinking. She could no longer bear to watch his face, but turned away, torn with grief and pity. Were there faces haunting him as Pearl's haunted her? She had been thinking of her own punishment, but Jonathan was being punished too. And instead of being able to come here, to shut everything out, when he went home Lucy was there. . . .

Poor Lucy. . . . Eve's vast pity could, at this moment, include even her. . . Always, even at school, sharp-faced, poised as a rattler ready to strike . . .

JONATHAN'S voice, dull and tired, came from behind Eve. "Eve —we can't stay here. I can't—" He broke off. "We've got to get away from here."

She turned slowly and looked at him. As she looked she saw herself as well. Quite middle-aged, both of them, beginning to fade. Her eyes were wet, yet she smiled gently at the picture of them — respectable, settled-looking — making a clandestine dash for freedom.

She left the window and went to him. She sat on the arm of his chair and slid her arm along the back of it.

"Jonathan—" she began. How could she say it? Where could they go and what could they do? Jonathan's one talent was the managing of money; and people would accept vagaries of character and private life in almost anyone except the man who took care of their money. There would never be another job for Jonathan. And Eve herself?

Her own talent, she thought without bitterness, was to sit on a cushion and sew a fine seam. There was no one to blame for that; she had liked it that way, until now. But it would be of no help to an outcast Jonathan.

She said none of these things. She knew that if Jonathan was determined she would go with him, for the strongest factor in her character still was the instinct to please, to adapt herself. But he turned at last and looked at her. He looked for a long time. Then gently, he cupped her face in the hands which were long and finely shaped for so clumsy a man.

"We're too old, Eve," he said at last.

She said nothing. Tears started up in her eyes and poured down over her cheeks.

"Maybe we should have done things differently in the beginning," he said. "But I don't know how."

"No. I wouldn't change anything. Even if—if there was another chance and I knew how it would be."

Then she said (and even to herself her voice sounded false): "We can wait, Jonathan. Maybe it will work out."

"Maybe," he said, and kissed her; lightly at first, then long and close, as they had kissed when they had first known each other . . . in the old mill . . . on the river when they had come together across the ice, their faces cold, their hearts pounding . . .

He left the room, his whisky still untouched on the table.

She did not follow him to the door, as she had always done, to watch him down the stairs. But she went to the bay-window and waited until he emerged from the door beneath her and started off down the street. She saw that he carried his ice-skates. He must have taken them out of the boot-box in the downstairs hall, where they had stayed for years.

Nothing seemed so final to her as that. If they could have skated once more—flying down Bottom River, together completely in the isolation of cold air and luminous dusk, with all the sordidness behind them—Lucy, Pearl, everything washed away in the clean air . . . But the ice was not thick enough, and by the time it was . . .

Oh, Jonathan, Eve thought. Before he actually moved out of sight her eyes became too blurred to see him, and she turned back into the empty room, the empty house.

. . . . . .

Jess Lubbock, half hidden in a corner of the unlighted station room, slid forward occasionally to take a furtive look out of the door, down the railroad platform. Both platform and station were deserted.

Good! So when she came nosing around the garage looking for him today, she could just look. He was going to get away and stay away until she could get it knocked into her head they weren't engaged, they weren't anything.

Miserable, he huddled in the corner, his hands clenched into fists inside his pockets, his whole body tense to the point of trembling.

When the distant shriek of the Strawberry Flyer pierced the mist and silence, he flattened himself still closer to the wall and stayed so until the train had pulled itself to a stop. Then, when the door of the waiting-room was hidden from the station platform, he hurried out and swung himself onto the platform of the passenger car. He flattened himself into a corner, as he had done in the station, and risked lighting a cigarette.

He couldn't have felt more guilty if he'd been a deserter or a thief, he thought. And all he'd wanted was just to mind his own business and—

Oh, no use to start thinking about it again. You went crazy if you tried to figure it out.

He threw his cigarette away and listened to the voices from the station platform—Horse Richards and George Hauer getting the milk cans unloaded. George was her father, but he couldn't blame George. He could honestly say he had no hard feelings against George at all, and he only hoped George would feel the same to him.

The engine began to wheeze and hiss and snort, preparing to pull out. Jess waited until a few preliminary jerks announced actual movement. Then he slid out of his corner and, as the wheels beneath him began to turn, pulled open the door of the passenger car and went in.

From the middle of the car a figure rose to meet him.

"Oh, Jess! I thought you'd never come in! I'd of felt so dumb if you'd

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just got off or something. Jess, I—"

Jess leaned heavily against the doorway. He began to feel a violent, shaking panic, worse than he'd felt under shellfire.

"What you follerin' me for, Janie?"

"Jess! Oh, my darling!"

She came towards him, and his panic mounted as she approached, clutching the backs of the seats against the starting jerks of the train. He knew if she touched him he would hit her, but he could not move away.

"You shouldn't-a been ashamed, Jess. Running off like this."

Jess stared at her in blind terror. He thought, I won't never get away. This kind of thing don't happen to a guy, there ain't nothing will ever make her leave me be. . . .

He turned and shot through the door back onto the platform. The train moved slowly, as it always did until it crossed the bridge over Top River Gap. Jess moved fast but he saw clearly and knew what he was doing. He waited until they crossed the culvert north of Beecher's Crossing, and when the train slowed almost to a stop before taking the curve, he jumped.

He could hear Janie's voice screeching behind him, so he got up at once and began to run, so she couldn't tell them somebody had jumped off and been hurt and make them stop the train.

They might do it anyway, but even Janie wouldn't be let off in the middle of a hog, so they probably wouldn't until they reached Hampton Crossing, the other side of the Gap. That gave him a little time but not much.

He got a ride at the crossing quicker than he had hoped, and less than half an hour after he had slipped from the waiting-room onto the train he was in his own room behind Corley's garage.

His mind was a rolling mixture of anger, fear, and even grief, but he knew exactly what he was doing and did it with speed. He pushed the few clothes that he owned into his army foot-locker. He dug the jar from the corner by the wash-stand, emptied it and counted the money. Nearly three hundred dollars. F now, when he had started putting it in there, he had a vague kind of idea that it might come in handy if he decided to get married or anything.

Oh well, he thought, no use to start thinking or trying to figure. Just get away, that was the thing. But he couldn't help thinking about the way he'd felt when he came back from the war, figuring he could take his time, take his time about every single thing and there wouldn't be nobody to push him around. He'd figured he'd try two, maybe three-four jobs to see how he liked them.

CORLEY was all right. He'd figured to work for him for a while, and then maybe try apprenticing with Dutch Fenstermacher, because he used to like working with wood when he was a kid. And take the girls out sometimes on a Saturday, and leave them be when he wanted to and go camping along Top River weeks at a time if he wanted to, and maybe after a while when he'd got enough of that loose feeling, that wonderful feeling of nobody pushing you, nobody telling you, maybe he'd get married and may be have a couple of kids.

And now there was nothing at all but to get away, get away as far and as fast as he could.

It took him only a few minutes to remove everything he owned from the room and all of it, even the [illegible] went into the foot-locker and [illegible] bag. He dragged them out and shoved them into the back of his car, looking around as he did so, realising that anyone seeing him would think he looked guilty.

He pulled over to the pump and filled the tank, carefully left the exact change for the eight gallons on Corley's desk, and then pulled out. No use to tell anybody, no use to explain. Leave them think what they'd a mind to, they would anyhow. Just go, get out, get as far away as he could and never, never come back.

His face twisted with anger and bewilderment, and his eyes were filled with tears. He had never given his feelings about Two River Junction any thought. He had not had to. It was home, that was all. He had left it only when compelled to join the Army, and his whole time away had been filled with a dull homesickness.

When he listened to the other fellows talk about what they'd do when they got out of the Army and where they'd go, he had heard them with pity and wonder. For in his own mind there had been no question. He would go home.

He drove up River Street toward the brick-yard, painfully conscious of everything he passed, knowing that he was seeing it for the last time. As he rounded the curve in the road beyond the brick-yard, and Pappy Wicomber's house came into view, swimming dimly out of the mist, he suddenly slowed down and brought the car to a stop, the motor still running.

He just looked at the place, that was all. He didn't have any feelings about that writing woman. None of this was her fault, any more than if she'd tripped over a string that set off a bomb that was all ready to pop anyway. Janie must have been off her nut already, only it didn't show, and looking at it one way, he could figure he was lucky this book had set it off before he married her.

While he looked he realised the front door had opened and that woman, that Faith Goodbind, had come out of it and now walked down the road toward him. Instinctively he started to pull off, but he did not. He didn't move. She came on slowly, and as she approached he glanced at the car, then at him, right into his face.

For a moment they stared at each other. All the pain and confusion that had been building up within him for weeks were in his look. But as she looked at him he got a very funny feeling. Well, he thought, it was as if she was the one that had had her props knocked out from under her—as if she was the one that had got hit by the explosion, not him.

For a moment he thought she was going to say something, to ask a question—he almost wished she would. But the moment passed. He looked away from her and up the road again, and set the car in motion. Out of the corner of his eye he saw that she, too, had turned away and started towards town.

Beyond Archer's place he turned into Hill Road. That was where the road began to lift away from the valley, the look of the landscape to change. That was the last of Two River, now lost to him forever. The mists of Two River closed behind him and the sun, as he chugged slowly to the top of Tamarack Mountain, lifted free of mist and took on a harsh and blinding brilliance. . . . . .

Faith had reached the spot where she had to decide: Would she walk through the street or the alley?

This had always been a thrilling decision; now it held terror. Since she had stood in her yard and stared back at the boy in the old car who had stared at her, her vague emotions, her sensations of unease had crystallised into fear. For this reason she knew that there was no choice today. She must walk through the street. The Thing, the Terror, had to be faced.

Stop it, she thought; there's nothing. Nothing at all. People who live alone are supposed to go queer eventually and maybe that's what's happening to me.

Yet when she turned off the dirt lane that paralleled the road outside the town limits and stepped onto the scrubbed brick sidewalk that marked the beginning of the main street, she was tense and wary.

As if each curtained window hid an enemy, she thought, scoffing at herself.

I am getting queer, she thought again. There is n thing nothin at all.

AT the place where the street began to curve downhill towards the river, there stood a brown, gabled house with a brass plate beside the front door saying it was a funeral home. Here a heavy woman in black clothes was scrubbing the front steps. She stood suddenly upright as Faith approached, and placed herself in the middle of the pavement.

Faith's heartbeat quickened. This is it, she thought. Whatever it is, now I'll find out. . . . For all the enmity that she had told herself was imaginary seemed concentrated in the woman's face, and she began to tremble visibly as Faith approached.

"You could-a minded your own business!" She thrust her face forward and spoke in a piercing whisper. "Lem didn't know nothing about it. And he wouldn't-a had to. And we'd-a had it then, for when we're old."

Faith stared. Go on, she thought. Don't stop. . . . Now I'll know.

But the woman seemed to collapse as suddenly as she had loomed in the pathway, as if the emotion that had held her stiff and trembling had drained out of her. She looked over her shoulder toward the house and then, after giving Faith [illegible] wilderment and hatred, sh dropped again to her knees and [illegible] her scrubbing brush.

Faith stood where she was. First the boy in the car and now this woman, looking at her as if—as if what? What is it, oh, what is it? she thought, but she could not ask. After a time she made herself go forward again, but slowly, slowly . . .

Two River's women, performing the endless chores of scrubbing front steps already clean, lifting leaves which had fallen on immaculate dooryards, stopped at her approach and stared. In the middle of the block between Hill and Lunadilla streets, one woman waited until Faith was almost upon her; then, with a stony glance, swept aside her scrubbing pail with a gesture that suggested a drawing aside of skirts, and stalked into her house, slamming the front door behind her.

Faith felt a flicker of amusement at the realisation that this was the first time she had ever seen a woman in Two River Junction use her own front door; and with a scrubbing pail, at that. . . .

The amusement was brief. Again she was laden with the sensation of pushing her way through a wall of enmity, and kept on asking herself: What has happened? What is it? What have I done?

Could it have anything to do with Amos? She had no illusions about what the town might think of their

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relationship, and had never had. He visited her house, where she lived alone; they took long walks together in the woods. But Amos had been seeing her thus for nearly a year. How, then, at this late date, could their friendship have caused this sudden wave of enmity that was washing over her?

She knew the agony of being the stranger, the outsider, which all her love for Pa, and her contentment with their life, had never quite overcome. This town was like all other towns — a group of houses which turned towards her closed doors and curtained windows; and what went on behind the doors and windows was mysterious and unknown to her.

But I did know, she thought. Pa and I knew people, always. The book was about people he knew and loved.

I NEVER saw them inside their own houses, she thought. I was never one of them. I knew them through Pa. It was Pa who had the quality that gave him a home and a friend wherever he happened to be. Alone she thought, I might never have known them at all.

Now nothing could overcome her feeling that to walk through this town was to walk among enemies. Even Amos seemed a part of this alien race. She had avoided him for weeks, and she knew that if they met at this moment she would see him as a stranger; and the warmth, the closeness they had known, the shared laughter, would be as distant as a dream.

Now she had almost reached the post office. That woman, she thought, might be in there—Rosa Silvernail, who had looked at her with enmity from the first.

But this was her reason for coming to face the terror, and Rosa was part of the terror; was, in Faith's mind, a symbol, an embodiment of it. In her mind it had a form and wore Rosa's face.

As Faith passed the entrance to The Saddler's and approached the post office, she saw a woman stop quickly and turn to face her. She knew her as she knew almost everyone in Two River. That is, she had passed her often enough to separate this face and figure from the others; and they were distinguished in Faith's mind by a remarkable loveliness, although she was not young.

Now the slender figure almost sagged against the brick wall of The Saddler's, and the face turned toward Faith, though smiling, was ravaged with some emotion deeper than Faith's own.

She looked almost ill. Instinctively Faith moved towards her, hand outstretched. But as she approached, the woman pulled herself upright, and brought her lovely face into composure. She even smiled.

"You're Faith Goodbind."

"Yes."

Now the woman looked at her, and looked and continued to look. Faith waited, not minding nor recoiling from this look as she had from the others. There was no enmity here, there was curiosity, fascination. At last the woman said, "I wanted to see you."

Faith said dryly, "You have seen me now."

The woman laughed then, and her laugh fulfilled the promise of airiness made by her movements. It was gay and delicate. Impulsively, Faith again stretched a hand toward her, thinking: This is a friend even if there's only one. She said: "Let's go in here."

It did not matter now that it was The Saddler's and that she would meet Rosa. The terror had receded to the back of Faith's mind, or had been partially replaced by the feeling of warmth and friendship emanating from this woman.

They went into the small el of the dining-room known as the Ladies' Bar, and the woman had composed herself until her movements were again poised and certain. Faith found herself bewitched by the aura of other-generation charm which surrounded this woman. The Saddler's was shabby, badly lighted, smelling of stale beer and boiled vegetables. Yet she herself seemed enclosed in an atmosphere suggesting wine-red velvet upholstery, crystal chandeliers, bouquets of violets.

When Rosa Silvernail appeared, the woman laid aside her squirrel muff and slid her coat partially back from her shoulders.

"Is there any of Papa's brandy left, Rosa?" she asked.

"Sure, Eve. Half a bottle and a couple not opened."

"Bring an unopened bottle, please. And two glasses."

"Okay, Eve."

Faith stared after Rosa, and for a moment the weight dispelled for a moment by the charm of Eve's presence descended on her again. Rosa's movements were heavy, almost dragging. The look of suction, of desperate hunger for information, was gone. She looked, in fact, at neither Faith nor Eve but at the table or the floor.

Now Faith's heart began to pound. Perhaps she would now find out. Between these two women.

She watched in silence, her throat tense, as the level's one poured brandy into the two glasses.

"I'm Eve Larch—I should have told you. We're so certain, in Two River, that everybody knows me because we all know each other so well."

She gave Faith a look that seemed casual, yet was searching. Then, she put down the bottle and moved one of the filled glasses across the table toward Faith.

"Papa never denied himself," she said with amusement. "He liked the conviviality of The Saddler's but didn't like the liquor. So he had Rosa keep part of her cellar stocked with his own. He was quite a one for having his cake and eating it too. But the brandy's been a help at times."

She turned toward Faith, a face which was beneath its composure, completely desolate, and made a slight gesture with her glass.

"To 'the power,'" she said.

"The power?"

"You know—

'Oh wad some power the gift gie us
To see ourselves as others see us!'

That's what's happened to all of us in Two River. Not all of us can bear it."

. . . . . .

As Stafford left the elevator in the lobby, he ran head on into Barclay Hampton, they backed away from each other, apologising, jostled by the crowd around them. Hampton took Stafford's arm and drew him into the coffee-shop.

"Glad we collided. I was just coming up to see you."

"Yes?" Oh you were, were you, Stafford thought.

"Yes. Why don't we take a run up to Two River Junction?"

"Two coffees, please. That's a thought, old man."

And quite by coincidence, what have I got but a briefcase full of stuff that would interest Miss Goodbind, he thought. Can you imagine that now? And my bag all packed, too! You couldn't have asked at a nicer time!

"Just an idea," Hampton said modestly. "Any excuse for a trip to the country."

"Good!" Stafford said cheerfully. "How about driving up with me?"

"Fine, old boy. You can pick me up at my place in an hour."

Hampton drained his cup and moved off among the tables. Stafford watched him narrowly. He just came from there, I'd be ready to swear it, he thought. And he came back to fetch me. There's something doing. Either something good and he wants an audience while he discovers it and brings it forth, or something bad and he wants somebody else around to be responsible.

Well—at least there was no further necessity for making up excuses to go to Two River. He looked at his watch and judged that he would have time enough to go back to the office and tell Carson something was doing in Two River, before he went to pick up Hampton.

Then he decided he would not do it. Carson's look of grey amusement rankled. If anything queer turned up, let him find out for himself that Stafford's hunches regarding Faith and Two River were still sound.

. . . . . .

Amos Tucker, standing at The Saddler's bar, heard Faith's voice. He did not at once turn his head. He put down his glass with care but kept his fingers gripped around it. Just her voice, he thought. Just that. . .

After a time he removed his hand from the glass and moved along the bar until, when he turned, he could see her. It had been weeks. . . Until this moment, as he looked at her, he had not realised how deeply he longed to see her, to touch her.

He knew it now, as he let his look move slowly over her.

"Want it filled up?" Rosa's voice broke into his thoughts.

"Okay."

His glass had been filled for some time before he noticed that Rosa had not moved away, but stood over him. He looked at her and some of what he felt must have been in his face, for she stared for a moment, and then, looking uncomfortable, turned away.

"Oh, why don't she go away to some place else!" She said suddenly, with desperation rather than venom.

"She can't. If she's driven away from here, she'll—"

AMOS stopped. (I'm all stirred up inside—with love, I suppose. Faith had said. For this house because I can come back to it every single night. . . And Two River, because I go down the same street every day and see the same people and the same houses. . .)

"This is the only home she's ever had," Amos said.

"Pappy Wicomber's?" Rosa asked, incredulous.

"Yes."

"My land! Not even no conveniences!" Her voice held withering contempt. "She can't-a had much in the way of folks."

"Depends what you'd call much. Just her father. He was a travelling preacher."

"One o' them!"

Amos looked at her. Her voice held contempt, but excitement as well; and her face, dull and dead-looking for so long, had come alive again. It wore something of its old look of eagerness and hunger.

He saw her objectively, with a bitter amusement unhindered by the turmoil the sight of Faith had stirred in him. This was all it took, he thought: a few crumbs of information, a little

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knowledge. Back in the beginning, just this much might have prevented all that had happened.

"He's been dead for several years," Amos said.

Another crumb, quickly pecked up.

"Why'd she hafta come here for!" Again Rosa's bitterness burst forth.

"She came because a real-estate agent told her about the house. She could afford it. And she—" Again he stared down into his glass, and his own voice was bitter. "She loved Two River."

Rosa, now silent, continued to stand over him but he did not look at her again. She said nothing more. At last she turned and moved slowly away into the kitchen.

He stood at the bar, trying to think. He knew that he could no longer stay away from the table at which Faith and Eve sat, and he tried desperately to plan. Everything he said and did must be exactly right.

Slowly he emptied his glass and slowly turned to walk through the dining-room toward the table where she sat.

"Hello, Eve," he said. And then, "Faith—"

Eve said, "Sit down, Amos. We're drinking almost the last of Papa's brandy. I consider it a highly symbolic act."

He sat down and thought that perhaps Eve was feeling the brandy a little, but with the grace that never deserted her. He was glad she was here and thought she might somehow help him.

Rosa brought a glass for him and he let Eve fill it, watching her with the affection grown out of long knowledge, years of memories.

He thought of his first memory of Eve. She had seemed the essence of grown-up femininity: a vision in layers of sheer white with a large white hat, immaculate white stockings and white kid shoes. . . .

He had loved her violently then and for years afterwards. And even after that there had existed between them always a warm and tender friendship.

Now he swirled the brandy around in his glass, and took a sip. He turned to Faith.

"I'm glad you and Eve have met," he said. "Eve was the first grand passion in my life. I've never recovered completely."

"Amos!" Eve smiled and laid an affectionate hand across his. Again Amos thought, Faith has nothing like this — no old affections, no ancient ties, forgotten until they pull you back. There'll be none of this to help me hold her.

Again he felt desperation, and with it pity so great that it seemed to pour from him.

"Faith—" he said, and stopped, and for a moment could only look at her. Then he said, "Don't ever do it again, Faith."

She looked a question at him and he said, "Stand behind a closed door without answering. That was—don't do it again."

"I'm sorry." But she looked at him only for a moment and there was no intimacy in her look. Her eyes moved constantly as if in search of a way out of a trap.

Presently she said, "Eve has told me. I know now what I've done."

Eve exclaimed, "Oh, my dear! Not you! You've done nothing at all!"

If Faith heard she gave no indication. Amos watched her for a moment and then said sharply, "Faith! You're being foolish. Two River has got itself in a stew. It's happened before. It's lived through scandals before, and crises and calamities and whatever else has come along."

He stopped, for Faith, her face closed against him, had turned towards a sound at the entrance of the dining-room. But he felt he had to press his point now, now before she got away again.

"You said you wanted to stay here. That's what staying in one place means. Can't you see—"

But he had to stop, for now the sound became a noise and then a turmoil. Rising above the attendant noises, with the clarity of a calliope, was the the voice of Roxie Drumheller.

"Turn me a-loose. Leave go of me. Luce Parker."

Amos stared incredulously, as others were staring. Rarely ever did Roxie leave the establishment she was pleased to call a "Club." Yet here she undoubtedly was, storming and raging, while Lucius Parker vainly tried to restrain her.

She looked around until she saw the table in the corner. Then, disheveled, glowing with rage, she charged, Luce Parker in her wake.

"Roxie!" He raised a voice obviously impotent against the flame of Roxie's fury.

"Shut up!" She barely paused to yell it over her shoulder. "Payin' you year in and year out to keep me out-a any kind-a trouble!"

"That's what I'm trying—"

"Then why did you let her say my rooms are dirty?"

WITH that, Roxie descended upon Faith, ignoring Eve and Amos. Knocking glasses and ash trays aside, she leaned forward until her face was within inches of Faith's.

"Ain't never even seen my place. But my rooms are dirty, are they?"

She reached over the table and caught Faith under the armpits and, before Amos or Lucius could move to prevent it, dragged her across the table, sending what glassware remained on it crashing to the floor.

Amos struggled to get from behind the table but before he could untangle himself Faith shook herself free. And then Amos stopped. For he saw Faith's face and thought suddenly: She can manage! She's not walking out, not on this!

"Don't touch me again," Faith said gently. But there was something in her voice that made Roxie pause. Only for a moment however; then she started forward again.

Faith's hand flew upward so quickly Amos scarcely saw it, but the slap sounded across the dining-room and almost at once the mark from it reddened along the flawless skin of Roxie's cheek.

Roxie stopped and stared, bewilderment slackening her features. Her Club was her world and in that world no one argued with Roxie. Amos, almost laughing with the joy that began to surge up in him, thought, Roxie can hand it out but she can't take it! Faith's got her cornered!

Roxie looked around her. Rosa stared in from the bar, and Janie Hauer's white, excited face looked out from the kitchen door. Two faces showed at the street door, and the window of the dining-room wore a fringe of them.

Now Roxie began to look trapped. She had always stayed out of town. Nobody could say she made a show of herself or her business. People who wanted to see Roxie could go out and find her.

The first roaring flame of her rage burned out, she now looked worried. But not completely finished.

"You wrote that story, didn't you?" she demanded.

"I wrote a story," Faith said. "But the only dirty rooms in it were in a disreputable house."

"Whadda-ya mean? I run a club! Lucius—" She turned raging to her lawyer, who now leaned casually against one of the booths and looked on with open amusement. "Lucius—you can't let nobody call my place—"

"Who called it anything, Roxie?"

"She—" Roxie raised a pointing finger, her arm outstretched. Then, in mid-gesture, she slowly let the arm fall.

"They — they all told me she meant my place."

"Who told you that, Roxie?"

Roxie looked about at the staring ring of faces and especially at Rosa's face, avid with interest and triumph. Oh, Rosa Silvernail would be glad not to miss this, all right. Caution reasserted itself.

"Lucius," she said at last. "I'd like to come up to your office a minute."

She bore her magnificent body with as much poise as ever as she swept ahead of Lucius; but there was an uncertainty in her face so rare in Roxie that it indicated utter defeat.

For a long moment after the door had closed behind them there was silence. Then Rosa stared at Faith, who still stood where she had faced Roxie, and said with grudging wonder: "Well! First time I ever seen Roxie Drumheller faced down."

. . .

When Stafford pulled around the curve of mountain to the spot where Two River Junction was revealed below him, he brought the car to a stop and looked down. He said nothing and was grateful that Hampton also was silent.

He stopped for the moment any effort to define his emotions, for he found them confusing. They were connected with Faith; that much he reluctantly admitted. But they had something to do with the town itself.

You have been listening, he thought, to too many of Hamp's broadcasts. Delightful vignettes created by the master hand with intent to charm.

But he knew it was not all Hampton. From the first, the place had had an effect on him, not altogether pleasant, yet always compelling.

He saw the town more clearly now than he had seen it before, for he had, on his other trip, arrived at night and left before the mist had completely lifted. Now it lay beneath him, sparkling in the winter sunlight, and he recognised — or thought he did — part of its fascination for him.

Everything of life was here, he thought; all the living and dying and loving and getting born that made up life in New York or London or Paris or Calcutta; but rendered exquisitely in miniature, even the most sordid detail surrounded by a golden fuzz of sunlit mist.

Everything he had left behind him in the city seemed blatant and overstated and a little shoddy. He thought of Faith Goodbind and of what her life in Two River must be like; then he began to think further in a manner that he felt to be foolish and even maudlin.

Hampton said dryly: "Don't let it hypnotise you, my boy. Old Kentucky Home and Hannibal, Missouri, and The Scenes of My Childhood — How dear to my heart, et cetera. All done up in a package with the Swanee River around it. Much too slick, believe me."

Stafford put his car into gear, said, "What are you talking about?" and started down the mountain towards Two River Junction.

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From the moment they pulled up before The Saddler's it was obvious that something was doing. There was a crowd of people on the pavement before the entrance, and several men had mounted the low stoop and were peering in. Stafford looked at them for a moment after he stopped the car.

He said, "You don't suppose the old Silvernail is letting one of the local drunks get away with making a disturbance."

"If she is, I don't intend to miss any of it," Hampton said cheerfully, and got out of the car. "From the moment we met, I've hoped to see somebody go after her with a bottle."

They began to make their way to the door, edging through the crowd. The watchers, when they saw that Stafford and Hampton intended to go in, moved aside enough to let them pass, but did not stop for a moment trying to see what was going on inside. All of them were silent, but their faces held expressions of astonishment and pure glee.

One man held his mouth open, as if ready for a roar of laughter, but he made no sound at all and his eyes were eager and staring. Hampton and Stafford looked at each other, eyebrows raised in question, and moved towards the door.

As they came close to it, it burst open in their faces with great force; and there stood before them a figure straight out of Rubens, her proportions generous and magnificently arranged, her skin coloring heightened to flaming intensity by what appeared to be pure rage. She might have been a goddess of wrath turned out by an artist who didn't know much about art but knew what men liked.

Stafford made a slight, surprised sound of admiration, and even Hampton gave a soft whistle.

She moved blindly through the crowd, which drew aside for her, its stares more fixed than ever. Stafford heard a few smothered snickers behind him.

If the woman noticed, she gave no sign until she reached the sidewalk and turned suddenly upon the man Stafford had noticed before because of his look of eager mirth. The man's mouth was open still but the laughter was gone from his face and it was blank as if, in changing his thoughts, he had forgotten to adjust his facial expression to fit.

The woman towered above him as if all her rage had to break forth somewhere and this was the nearest object at hand.

"Pretty funny, ain't it?" she demanded. "Get a good look — it's something to see! Only if I was you, Judd Harkins, and spent my nights the way you spend yours, I'd keep my weaselly little nose out-a other people's business!"

A nervous titter went through the crowd. But there was a shifting of feet and a sudden refusal of one man to meet another's eye, as if what the woman had said might possibly have been said to others as well.

She swept down the street, and with her great, curving bulk removed, it was seen that she was followed by a dry, grey little man who seemed to be drawn along after her as if in a vacuum produced by her own displacement of air.

The crowd gave a few more scattered titters. But it began to dissolve, its members moving off almost as quickly as the woman and her followers had done.

Hampton, still watching the retreating figure of the woman, released a long, gentle sigh. He and Stafford stood and looked, with mutual regret for something exciting glimpsed and immediately lost, until she and her satellite disappeared into the entrance of a building down the street.

Then they went into The Saddler's.

. . . . . .

Faith stood where Roxie had left her. She was tense and wary with anticipation, for she knew her trouble was not over. It was the beginning. It was happening now; and she was quite alone. Pa was not here. His face, his voice were blotted completely from her memory and she knew it had to be this way, for she was not Pa. She did not think and feel as he had done and from now on she must face things her own way, for good or bad.

The faces that had been blurred in the background when Roxie stood before her became clear. Some of them were moving closer, and several figures slipped in through the entrance. She had no idea what would come next or what she should do, but for now, she thought, don't move, just stay where you are and don't move.

The heavy woman in black, the woman she had seen earlier, leaned forward clutching a large fancy-work bag with shaking hands. She said: "Why'd you hafta come here for?"

A tiny, ferret-like woman beside her broke in quickly in a voice edged with hysteria: "Wouldn't you think a person'd know where they wasn't wanted?" and suddenly began to weep.

Faith said slowly (and to her own ears her voice seemed to come from a distance and to belong to someone else): "I guess strangers are never wanted. They can only stay somewhere, some time, until they aren't strangers any more."

"Did it hafta be here?" said the small, weeping woman, and Rosa said: "Oh, shut up, Fern."

"Even if I went away, would it make any difference?"

The young girl who stood with Rosa behind the bar said, "No, it wouldn't! Nothing won't ever be the same, no matter what."

Suddenly there was a stir among the knot of people by the dining-room entrance. A newcomer pushed his way in, and there was a quick murmur of voices before he moved forward through the crowd.

"We're lookin' for Doc," he said. He was panting heavily, and his face was alive with excitement and the importance of his message.

He went on: "They found Jonnie Bricker. Hung up down by Beecher's Crossing with his skates on. Drownded!"

AFTER the first moment of stunned quiet, the room filled with the babble of voices and the faces now were turned towards the bringer of news. Faith stood, tense still and waiting, and thought, It's over, at least for now.

Only then was she conscious that behind her in the little booth Eve Larch had come slowly to her feet. There was the crash of a chair to the floor. Faith turned.

She looked at Eve and saw a face suddenly old. Amos said, "Eve—" and then, to Faith, "We've got to get her out of here."

Faith stared at them both. She began to feel sick. Unconsciously she brought both her hands up, pushing them against the sides of her face.

"This . . . have I done this?"

Before Amos could speak, Eve turned and reached a hand towards her. For a moment the shattered, broken look left her face and it became almost ugly with certainty and self-contempt.

"All that's been done we've done to ourselves!" Eve said. "Over years and generations. Before you ever saw us. We've looked in a mirror—"

Amos took her shoulders gently and said again, "We must get her out of here, Faith."

"No," said Faith. "You go with her. I—I shouldn't be there."

Then a voice behind her said, "Faith—my dear child—what is going on here?"

She was not surprised to see Mr. Hampton and Joseph Stafford, for nothing at that moment would have startled her or aroused any emotion. She was numb.

Stafford said, "Let's get out of this. We'll take you home. For that matter, we'd better take you back to town with us — at least for the time being."

She stared at him. I can get out of it, she thought. Right this minute I can get in the car with them and leave all of it as if it had never been. Move on, like always, like Pa and me . . .

She turned to look at Amos. He looked back for a moment, though he was moving Eve gently from the booth towards the door. But Faith shifted her eyes at once thinking, It can't be Amos helping decide this, or thinking what Pa would do, or anything else . . . If it's ever going to be me, it's got to be now.

She said, turning to Stafford, "Thank you. But — I think I'll walk home . . . I—I'll meet you both there, if you like."

Both men protested at once. "But my dear child!" Hampton said. Stafford said, "Faith, you can't!"

"Yes," she said. "Yes — I can. If I don't walk down that street—I—I'll never walk down another. Except as a stranger. Always moving along."

Stafford said impatiently, "You're being hysterical. This will blow over, whatever it is. You can come back. Or settle down somewhere else."

"No," Faith went on, saying things she knew would mean nothing to them, but she had to say them aloud, define them with her voice for her own sake. "Everything I've known about people has been through Pa. Not second-hand, exactly: I knew them too, the people, and they were my friends. But everything about them — their feelings and the things they said and did, were filtered by Pa's — his love. And gentleness."

She paused, but before either of the men could interrupt she added: "Maybe they are the way Pa thought. When I'm as old as he was when I knew him, maybe I'll feel the way he did. Only — I've got to know for myself. And if I go away from here I'll never stay, anywhere, long enough."

They said nothing more. Faith stood for a moment. Then she walked through the silent room and started down the road towards the end of the town, towards the house in the meadow, beyond the brick-yard.

. . . . . .

Eve disposed of her luggage on the rack, taking as much time about it as she could. Then she made a prolonged and unnecessary check of the things in her handbag. She removed her thin kid gloves, shaped them carefully, folded them together, put them in the handbag. There wasn't anything else to do. She could take off her coat, but she was saving that for later . . . in case anyone walked through; in case, if someone looked at her, she could not keep her face under control. . . . Then she could turn, taking off her coat, arranging it behind her. . . .

(Oh, Jonathan, Jonathan, my poor Jonathan. . . .)

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She must not do that. Stop, she thought, force it out of your mind, think of anything at all. . . .

There was the house. It didn't matter really, she knew that. She knew a house was a shell. Its contents ephemeral, all of it vulnerable to destruction in a moment by fire, storm, even in a longer moment by decay. . . . Yet she could not have left it to Pearl, that was one thing she could not do.

Thank goodness, there had been Amos. He would remember. Without her having to tell him anything, he had understood. He had not discussed the price at all. He had not tried, as others in Two River might have done, to get it for less, nor had he (and for this she was even more grateful) tried to pay her more. He had asked no questions when she said the only thing she wanted was that Pearl Miller should never have it, nor anyone who might sell it to Pearl Miller. But he would remember.

At the end he had grinned wryly at her and said, "The first investment I've ever made. I'm sure Dad would have approved of Eve, it makes me feel conservative and solid."

EVEN now (Oh, don't think of it, don't let yourself think of it) if Pearl had got the house when first she had asked for it, Jonathan would be there, in the downstairs parlor . . . at the place where the velvet draperies had covered the doorway to the library . . . and Pearl would be there, hovering, heavy as putty, her childhood's avidity for disaster gleaming through the professional dolor of her face.

Oh, thought Eve, stop, please stop! she pushed her face, eyes closed, against the train window. . . . Oh, Jonathan, she thought, you could have taken me. I should have guessed when I saw the skates but I didn't or I'd have come too. . . It would have been good, flying down the ice again, just the two of us. . . . If we had been together we wouldn't have known at all when the ice cracked beneath us . . . it would have been quick. . . .

For a moment she was lifted away, was flying with the clear, soaring freedom of movement on the ice. . . . Then she returned to the heaviness of her body, the grime of the train which now began to jerk itself into motion. No one else had got on. She was dully grateful for that. It would give her a little time to herself before she would have to face other travellers and eventually, Vronnie.

Vronnie would be decent; she always had been. She wouldn't condescend for Eve knew she was extremely glad to have her. It was almost impossible to get anyone these days to do the exquisite hand-work Vronnie's customers had come to expect, upon which the reputation of her shop was partially built.

There were, Eve thought dryly, a few advantages in being an anachronism. For generations no one had been taught to sit on a cushion and sew a fine seam; no one but Eve. Now (how shocked, how disgusted Papa would be!) she would earn her living by it.

But even Vronnie would not be able to help thinking, The wages of sin. . . .

What a good text I would make for someone. Eve thought, knowing how completely her face had lost its illusion of youth, how deeply now the lines were etched. . . . And she would fit the text, for she was being punished—but not for what they thought. Not for loving Jonathan. If her life had held any purpose at all, it had been to be there when Jonathan had needed her. . . . More possibly because of her life with Papa — indolent, without purpose except to please.

Yet if she had lived otherwise she would not have been there when Jonathan came down to the river, fastening her skates in the blue dusk when other women were bustling about their kitchens. . . .

No. If she had sinned it was the sin of being without courage. I made a lovely pattern, she thought bitterly; it hypnotised even me. Papa's charming daughter in Papa's charming house. . . . always gentle and lovely for Jonathan. . . . It would have been sordid, going away with him, living in ugly little rooms, being turned away from good places.

I hadn't the courage to be sordid . . . I hadn't even the courage to stay, with dignity, in Two River and face the stares, the memory of Pearl Miller in the doorway.

This was her sin and for this she would be punished all the days of her life. . . .

The train whistle shrieked out the warning that it was approaching the bridge over Top River Gap. Eve did not open her eyes, but she felt Two River Junction slip forever behind her.

Jonathan, Jonathan, good-bye . . . oh, Jonathan! . . . . . .

Pearl cowered in her chair behind the table. Her fancy-work bag was clutched in her lap. Lem hadn't found it! He hadn't once thought of looking there — as if she'd of kept it any place else! As if she could have borne to have it any place except right here, where every time she put her hand in for a ball of thread or her bobbin, she could touch it, stroke it with her fingers. . . .

But he had — he had the account books! Her own account books! And the look on his face was — it was like Eve had looked at her, as if she was—as if she wasn't human at all but something — something nasty. Her heart pounded until its heavy beating seemed ready to break through the walls of her chest.

They hadn't no right looking at her like this . . . her own husband, and Evie Larch too. . . . She clutched the bag in her lap, feeling cold sweat break out all over her body.

Lem said heavily, "That's how you done it."

"I dunno what you're talkin' about, Lem."

"Savin' me all that work — keepin' the accounts. And you got the money from Hoppy Smith . . . and from Jen Cornish, for her ma, when Jen ain't had money for a good meal in fifteen years. Other folks can help out where they're needed. Doc'd take care a Mrs. Cornish for ten years. Luce Parker c'd get that claim of Jen's settled. . . . But they don't get buried for nothin'. . . . No. . . . They got to pay for that, even if they go without . . ."

He slammed the ledger shut and continued to stare at her fixedly, yet with revulsion.

"I ain't never liked this business, exactly," he said. "I never thought nobody went into it by choice. Kind of the way I did, I figured. Pa had it — and come time to settle down, seemed I just drifted 'til I had it. But I ain't never been shamed by it. Somebody had to do it and I done the best I could. Now I'm . . . shamed. I feel like — all these years. I—I been bleedin' folks too grieved to fight back."

Pearl protested in her mind, but her voice would not come. They'd owed the money, all of 'em. And she hadn't pressed none of them. Just mentioned it, now and then . . . , seemed like they'd wanted to pay, for fear she might think it was disrespectful to their loved ones if they didn't.

Not that she'd ever said such a thing, she wouldn't have dreamed up such a thing . . . Just mentioned it to them, two or three times . . . sometimes once was enough . . . It had been more of a favor to them than anything, hadn't it? Giving them a chance to pay a final respect. . . .

But against the look on Lem's face she could not protest. Now he said: "I don't know where you put it. I don't want-a. I hope I never see it. But I'll keep my own accounts from now on. And I'll get another assistant. And if any collectin' or receivin' of payments is done by anbody but me" —he stared at her and Pearl knew how deep the menace in his voice went— "you'll be out in the streets the next day with nothin' but the clothes to your back. And all that money you saved up for yourself. All that nice money."

He left the kitchen and Pearl trembled in her chair. He couldn't-a meant that — he never could! Paying out for an assistant when she hadn't cost him nothing . . . and getting in somebody strange to do her work . . . he couldn't!

Her chair rocked back and forth as if pushed by a spirit hand. She clutched the fancy-work bag, with its heavy treasure, to her chest, and her tears poured down upon it.

CHEERFULLY Lucius Parker attacked his Sunday morning sausages. May Anna, dressed for church, pecked at her food. She cast an occasional quick look at her husband but, except for that, stared down at the congealing mess of eggs and sausages upon her plate.

For days her husband [illegible] d seen, for him, almost sprightly. Something amused him. [illegible] perception of her husband's mental processes was dim, she knew enough to mistrust any situation that amused Lucius.

She was early for church but, after forcing upon herself a few sips of lukewarm coffee, she began to gather up her gloves and bag and prayerbook. Lucius leaned back in his chair, sighed with satisfaction, and looked at her.

"Looks as if there might be a law case in that Faith Goodbind business after all," he said casually.

"You mean — you mean somebody is going to sue her?"

"Oh, not her. Told you nobody'd have a case there. Only somebody wrote a letter to her publishers. Anonymous. That's not a Federal offence. But there might be a little libel in it."

With great effort May Anna continued to put on her gloves, carefully stroking down each finger. For a moment the old feeling flowed through her again — everybody noticing just her, talking for days of just her. Her heart pounded.

Then she knew it wouldn't be the way she'd planned. It would be—oh, horrible!

Lucius went on easily: "Fellow showed it to me. I'd say he had a case, all right, if they find out who wrote it."

But he shouldn't have done that! That wasn't the way she had planned it. She hadn't meant to keep it anonymous at all. She had purposely thrown out hints in the letter, so that of course they'd come right to her if they came at all. All they'd have had to do was show anybody in Two River the

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blue stationery, and they'd have been sent to her at once. And she had known just what she'd say, just how she'd appear. Kindly, tolerant, more in sorrow than in anger . . . only to help these poor, bewildered little people. . .

She'd had a picture of a meeting of the Book and Thimble, with possibly a publisher's representative (a young, intellectual type — poetic) making a public statement, smiling charmingly upon May Anna and then upon the other ladies. . . .

Slowly she started towards the door. Lucius was torturing her, of course. If they had shown him the letter he knew it was hers. And if anybody found out now, she'd look like a fool. . . He wouldn't tell, of course. Probably he'd thrown the publisher's young man off the track. . . .

But you couldn't tell. You never could tell about Lucius. If anything touched his perverted sense of humor . . .

AT this moment Lucius was having the time of his life. Acting as if the idea of the letter's being May Anna's had never entered his head, putting on his glasses and spreading out the Sunday paper. . . .

She turned quickly and almost ran from the house. Oh, everything had got out of control; nothing went the way she planned it any more, nothing at all, and she seemed to herself to be slipping into the unbearable drabness of oblivion. . . .

She imagined contempt or amusement in the glances of those who passed her — or, worst of all, blank non-recognition. After all she'd done—making over her whole life, adapting herself, sacrificing herself!

At church, as she removed her hat and donned her choir gown, she was only half conscious of what she was doing. She took her place in the choir loft, nodding vaguely to those ahead of her, and heard Fern Ferris, in the seat beside hers, return a simpering greeting.

Oh, this was the worst! And today of all days! Standing next to that woman, adapting her own pure contralto to the tinny off-key soprano that had led Two River's choir long before May Anna's arrival. You might subdue Fern Ferris anywhere else, but not in the choir. Her answer to any attempt at doing so was simply to sing louder and hold her notes longer than anybody else.

And today their offertory duet was Whispering Hope (by special request of Amy Hauer, who requested it annually In Memory of One Who Passed Away). Fern, uninhibited enough at any time, made what May Anna could only call a spectacle of herself with Whispering Hope. Given that soprano obbligato, with the contralto subdued to a supporting role, she took the notes and soared aloft with them, regardless of any violence she might do to the suffering eardrums below.

Oh no, thought May Anna, it was too much. It was more than she could bear!

The congregation gradually seated and settled itself. The service began. May Anna heard none of it and got through the first hymns only by instinct. (Lucius would never let anyone know about the letter. He was, after all, a lawyer. But he knew. He might even have the letter — she could imagine his taking the precaution of getting it. Promising the man, probably, to try to find out who had written it. And it did not shock or impress him in any way, it just amused him, and would for years. He would never mention it again, probably, but she would know that he knew).

Fern Ferris began to rustle importantly beside her, and she heard the hollow gasps of the ancient organ as it gathered its wind in preparation for further effort. It was time for the duet.

As the first note of the introduction wheezed out, she and Fern stood in unison. Then something happened within May Anna — one of those inspirations that occasionally came to her, as in a flash of light, and upon which she had the ability to act without thought or caution. Two chords before her time and higher by a full key, May Anna began — softly, with mellow beauty — her part of the duet:

"If in the dusk of the twilight,
Dim be the region afar—"

There was panicky motion beside her. Lucy Cartwright, at the organ, carried the original key for several bars and then, in confused haste, adapted herself to the key in which May Anna had started. Breathlessly Fern joined in, her voice shaking.

If May Anna noticed any of this no one could see it. Her voice, true and unfaltering, ran on, swelling in the slightest degree, as if in kindness, to cover Fern's lack, singing sweetly of sunshine to follow the showers.

She could feel Fern grow tense in preparation for the refrain. She herself went on in perfect serenity, her gaze fastened, as if in pure love, upon the stained-glass window opposite the choir loft.

Fern took a deep breath.

"Whi-i-iss--purr--ing H-o-o-ope," she managed, and May Anna thought calmly, that's her highest note, as she herself, her voice at its best, sang:

"Whispering Hope! Whispering Hope!"

She was wrong, for Fern, her voice more strident, managed to go the note higher required by the next line:

"Oh, how we-e-e-e-el-come thy vo-o-o-ice!"

On "voice" Fern's own voice cracked. She put such force behind her effort that the break was no small thing. It sent a shattering stir through the entire congregation and even the supporting organ faltered.

Not May Anna.

"Welcome thy voice, oh how welcome thy voice!"

sang May Anna.

There was a rustle and even a small croak from Fern as if, for a moment, she considered making a second try. But she did not. May Anna, in triumphant solitude, completed the refrain.

The organ wheezed to a finish. They sat down amid such a stunned silence that the minister had to break into it twice with a cough before the elders, at the back of the church, could loose themselves from their paralysis and come forward with the collection plates.

Undercover of the offertory blessing, May Anna could be seen to lean over, her face filled with helpfulness, and murmur sympathetically to Fern. As the minister, sweating profusely and with shaking voice, said, "Amen!" Fern arose and, choking sounds emerging from behind the handkerchief she had pressed to her face, fled from the choir loft.

May Anna looked after her with pity. Then with a glance about her, which said: How dreadful for her, poor creature! she settled back in her place and once more fixed her look on the highest point of the stained-glass window, its rose and violet panes gently diffusing the light on her upturned face.

. . . . . .

Hampton and Stafford checked out of The Saddler's and walked down the hall. Rosa's stare followed them, and Stafford found himself moving his shoulders inside his coat as if to shrug it off. When the door closed behind them he felt a definite relief from tension.

She's like a witch, he thought. The ones we believed in as children who put spells on you if you misbehaved. One's antagonism towards her was as instinctive and deep-rooted as superstition. He half paused and glanced back towards the entrance of the inn.

"What is it?" Hampton asked, already stowing his bag in the back of the car.

"Nothing . . ." Stafford opened the door on the driver's side and got in. He started the motor before he spoke again. "Only — she's like a witch. Exactly. I couldn't help thinking—"

"My boy, I'm positive it will be months before either of us can help thinking. What an experience! Unique, I hope."

"I know. But there was something about it — as if there had been some kind of curse, or a spell; as if they were all helpless under some — some horrible compulsion. And I kept feeling, all along, as if somewhere there'd been something deliberate. Something—"

"Incantations? I haven't a doubt of it. With no flight of the imagination whatsoever I can see her prancing around a three-legged pot, tossing in newts and earwigs. Let's get out of here."

Obediently Stafford started the car and drove in silence for a time. They passed the brick-yard, and then Faith's cottage. He did not change the speed of the car, and neither of them spoke.

That, he thought dryly, was a concession on Hampton's part. He had expected a certain amount of needling. But he remembered the look on Hampton's face when Eve Larch had left The Saddler's, and suspected that, for once, he was not in a position to needle.

Though he did not turn his head, he was conscious of the moment when the bend in the road put the cottage behind him.

He had not seen Faith again, after all. He and Hampton had spent the evening in The Saddler's bar, talking. George Hauer had been there, and that dehydrated lawyer (bright old boy, though), and others whose names Stafford did not know. They had talked until early morning, as if the violent scene of the afternoon had released some tension within them. Stafford had learned of the strange situation created by Faith's book.

CAREFULLY, Stafford had explained that it was impossible —that he himself had seen part of the manuscript before Faith ever moved to Two River.

"We knew that." George Hauer had shrugged casually. "Dunno what made everybody act so dumb. Little towns stay too bottled up, maybe. Once the cork was loose the whole business blew up."

They had talked on into the night; about the scene of the afternoon, which obviously would make conversation for years to come; about other upsetting events of the preceding weeks.

Before his eyes, Stafford watched life take on new aspects.

George would drain a beer glass and argue amiably with Lucius: "Lucy was nuts to think it had to be her folks. Anybody gunta get worked up over that, it should-a been Lon Hawes."

Or, "Land knows Fern had no call to get worked up. If you had of took

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that boarding-house madam for her Ma, it would-a flattered her."

Once Lucius had glanced at Stafford and given his dry grin.

"No different from New York, son," he had said. "Only there, I guess, you can move around the corner."

At the time Stafford had been annoyed at this implication of innocence on his part. Life in New York, after all—

Life in New York was something, he now admitted wryly, from which he could move around the corner. Or take a place in Connecticut. Or, if it flung itself at you, sudden and raw, as it sometimes did (the time the man had leaped from a roof and landed on the lawn of the terrace where he was having cocktails), you could turn away, you could call the right people and have it taken care of, and say protectively to your companion, Don't look, darling, it's nothing to do with you.

OF course, that was it. That was the difference. In Two River, nothing ever happened of which George Hauer or Amos Tucker might say, It's nothing to do with you. The sudden death, the sordid scandal, was never too far distant from your own life. In Two River Junction the bell never tolled for a stranger.

Well, he thought, as he shifted gears to take the second curve of the mountain road, it is all over and Hamp and I are getting out quite safe. Two knowledgeable strangers, wise in the ways of the world, and we are not bound by the curse, getting off scot-free. Whatever was in the back of our minds, we've escaped with no strings attached.

He wondered when and how the tradition that pictured the knowing city slicker as opposed to the innocent country bumpkin had arisen. He knew now that a feeling he had had that life in Two River resembled life in a mirror was right, but that he had been wrong in thinking that what he saw was the real thing seen in charming miniature.

It was, rather, the real thing rendered to a highly concentrated essence, overwhelming in its intensity compared to which life as he knew it in the city was a watered-down imitation.

He permitted himself, now, to think of Faith. The cottage was far behind him, and when the road turned at the top of this hill it would close from view the curious, isolated triangle of land that held Two River Junction. He was safe. He could think of her as much as he wished and admit, at last, that he might have loved her.

It had been a close call, and he had not got off untouched, for he could keep away from her entirely and there would still be Summer Brave, which was Faith herself, as much as the oval face and slender body.

When they reached the top of the mountain he turned the car into the small curve of parking space that had been worn out at the edge of the road by people who pulled off to admire the view. Silently he and Hampton looked back the way they had come.

There was little to see. Mist lay over Two River, protecting it from the sight of strangers, muffling even its sounds. The spire of the Congregational Church pushed through at one point and, more dimly, the weathercock of The Saddler's Inn.

It's her kind of place, Stafford thought. Whether she stays here or not, the place she finds will be like this. (If there is such another, which God forbid!) And it's not, he thought grimly, for the likes of me. I couldn't stand the pace.

Beside him, Hampton let out his breath in a long sound of relief and finality.

"Well. That will be one for the books for some time to come."

"Will it?" Stafford was curious. "Will you really use it?"

Hampton looked down at the gently shifting mist for some time. Then he said, "No."

Inside himself Stafford grinned. Good old Hamp! Hampton the charm-boy. He hadn't got out of it untouched either! Well, well, it's a small world, he thought cheerfully, and started the car and swung it into the road again.

Neither of them spoke as they set their faces towards the city. Shaken as they both had been, they raced eagerly towards it.

. . . . . .

Amos sat at his worktable and looked at the deed in his hand. Eve had given it to him the day before she left; Lucius had the other papers.

He thought now of Eve or, rather immersed himself completely in memories of Eve, all the old memories from the many years he had known her. Goodbye, Eve, ran through his mind still. They had smiled when she left and he had held her hand for a moment, the affection of years warm between them.

More than affection, he now thought. Every man who knew Eve must have been a little in love with her. She was a distillation of all that was feminine: gentle, complaisant, lovely; unattainable, yet warmly personal. The men were fortunate who had known Eve.

Tears had stung his eyelids as he had watched her move, with delicacy and grace, out of his cluttered workroom. Goodbye — goodbye, Eve — had run over and over through his mind after she had gone, as it did now. And knew that was goodbye to part of himself, part of his youth.

What would he do with her house, he wondered? It was impossible to imagine anyone except Eve herself living in it. If there were ghosts, then Eve's would forever occupy the upstairs sitting-room, hovering over the piano, touching the tea things with graceful ghostly hands, filling the rooms with the remembered scent of violets. . .

I could take Faith there, Amos thought. There we would both be alien, starting from the beginning. Eve's ghost would be kind to Faith . . .

He pushed himself away from the desk abruptly, as if forcibly pushing away the thought of Faith. He went to the window and looked down at the river.

There was nothing more he could do. Not even for Faith. Two people had to want a marriage. She knew that he wanted her, that he would do anything to keep her here, to make the situation bearable for her. It was impossible for him to know, even to guess, what she would do.

He felt that if she found Two River untenable and went away she would never find a home again but would wander, always, as her father had done. And she was not like her father, he was certain of that.

He stared down at the ice-coated river, remembering her eager, happy face. This house is mine, she had said, and I can come back to it every single night! And, looking at the river, he thought of Jon Bricker, and again of Eve, and of the whole fantastic mess.

If Faith left, he could not blame her. But he had been wrong before. He knew now that if she left he would follow her, though there would be little of happiness for either of them in that.

He heard footsteps on the stairs and half turned, listening. It sounded like a woman — but Eve was gone. It might be—

He turned fully and then stood motionless. It was Faith. He thought: I've planned our lives together, in several different versions, and I never heard her step on a stair before.

He neither moved nor spoke, but looked at her.

Once when he was twelve years old he had tried to tame a young fox. He had spent weeks leaving food for it; and slowly, gently trying to approach it, talking, coaxing. On the day when the fox had not fled at his approach but had turned, tensely wary but waiting, he had stood as he did now, his breath stopped, not moving even a hand.

Faith said, "I—I've never been here. You said once you'd show me—"

"Of course."

He showed her the workroom; his drawing-boards and books of sketches; the pieces of furniture in the process of completion.

She said nothing, but ran her hand along the curve of the chair John had left clamped in the vise, and carefully inspected the insides of the drawers of the chest Dutch had finished that afternoon.

He took her into the packing-room where rows of crated furniture stood ready for shipping, and into the shed where the wood was stacked for curing. He spoke very little and she said nothing at all. At last there was nothing left to show her.

"Thank you," she said. But she did not move to go.

"Had supper?" he asked casually.

"Yes."

"Going home?"

"Yes."

"I'll walk along. Wait'll I lock up." He turned easily away from her, holding his breath. But she waited.

LIGHTLY Amos took her arm (she did not withdraw it), and they walked across the millrace and into River Street. They passed The Saddler's. Rosa, working at the latch on the storm door, turned as they approached. She regarded them intently and then turned back to the latch.

"Evenin'," she said. Faith and Amos said, "Good evening."

They passed Lucius Parker on his way to The Saddler's. He stopped before them and his face, within its tortoise-like limitations, took on a look of cheerfulness. He removed his hat with a gesture that was, for Lucius, sweeping.

"Miss Goodbind," he said. "Good to see you. Good to see you, Amos. Good evening."

They returned his greetings, and after they had passed, Amos glanced back over his shoulder.

"Well—" he said. "Lucius was glad to see us."

Faith did not smile. She walked on, looking straight ahead with an expression on her face that made Amos think of something he had seen before, long ago and far from Two River, but he could not remember what it was.

They passed Eve Larch's house, and

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he felt Faith's arm grow tense beneath his hand. But she did not look at it or change her pace. What agony this must be for her, he thought, and knew if she could not bear it he would be unable to blame her.

When they reached the bend in River Street that led to the brick-yard and to Faith's house, a car coming from the opposite direction pulled up near them. There were sounds of argument from within it, and then a woman opened the door and got out. She was plump and eager and not of Two River, but she approached them unhesitatingly.

"Excuse me," she said. "Could you tell me — I mean, I understand The Writer — that Faith Goodbind that wrote Summer Brave — lives around here. They told me in a town a few miles back. I was wondering—"

Amos looked at Faith, ready to help if she needed help. But she looked at the woman for a moment and then said, "I'm Faith Goodbind."

"You—oh, good gracious!"

The woman flew into a fever of animation.

"I never thought — Harvey! This is her! She, I mean, The Writer!"

Good grief, thought Amos, she says The Writer as one might say The Duck-Billed Platypus.

"I hardly know — I never thought I'd just bump into you! I didn't even expect — I wonder if you'd — I've got your book some place!"

She scrabbled frantically through the large bag she carried and called "Harvey!" to the man in the car, but was answered by a growl.

"I would be caught like this!" she went on. "If you'd just write your name for me on anything. I—oh, here! Would this do?"

She produced a folded piece of paper, and as she passed it to Faith Amos saw that it was a road map heavily marked.

Faith looked at it for a moment, as if bewildered. Then she said, "I haven't a pen."

Again the woman began to paw through the cluttered bag, but Amos said quickly, "Here's one," and handed his own to Faith.

She looked down for a moment at the map in her hand. Then she wrote her name and, watching, he saw that Faith Goodbind was scrawled over the spot in the map that was Two River Junction.

WHILE the woman scrambled back into the car, pouring out effusive thanks, Faith and Amos stood quietly together. They saw her craning her neck out of the window to watch until they were out of sight.

"She looks," said Faith, "as if she'd seen a kangaroo leap out of the woods."

He tightened his hand on her arm and looked down at her. Now he knew where he had seen the expression her face wore. When he had come back from overseas there had been a family of refugees on the boat.

The day they had sighted New York harbor they had clustered at the rail, silent and staring, amid the wild cheers of the men around them. They had known that everything familiar was behind them, that everything they faced would be strange, and that for years, perhaps forever, they would be aliens in a strange land.

They had not turned away their faces. They had looked, as Faith looked now, with hope but no illusion.

He let her arm go and raised his hands to her face, holding it framed between them. She did not protest. She looked back at him but with none of the eager laughter, the summer warmth of that day beneath the pear tree. It would take time to reach that point again; even then, it would not be quite the same.

But she did not move away. He said, "Faith," softly, and kissed her. They walked on towards her house.

. . . . . .

Rosa put her screw-driver in her apron pocket, tried the latch experimentally and, satisfied, went inside. The bar and dining-room were deserted and she walked on into the kitchen.

Janie Hauer stood with her back to the room, staring out into the alley. Her shoulders shook and, though she pushed a handkerchief against her face when Rosa entered, it did not shut out the sound of snuffling sobs.

Rosa glanced at her, then began to move about the room, closing and locking cupboard doors, checking the stove, straightening dish towels, in preparation for the closing of the dining-room.

Janie did not turn and, though she made more of an effort to muffle them, the sobs continued. At last Rosa stood in the middle of the room and looked at her.

"Now, Janie. Ain't no use to take on so."

Janie removed the handkerchief and a sobbing wail escaped her.

"He's gone for good, Rosa. He'll never come back!"

"Now. You can't be certain o' that."

"Yes I can!" The last word of each of Janie's phrases trailed off into a wail. "Mr. Corley said he took all his things!"

Rosa placed her hands on her hips and stared with a look that was kind though exasperated. She'd been fond of Janie always, even though she came mighty close to being a plain fool, considering she'd always been bright with books and that.

"Well—" Rosa tried not to sound as impatient as she felt—"you must-a scared him clean out-a his britches. Chasing after him that-a-way."

"Oh, Rosa — I never chased him! I just wanted him to know — to know that—I knew how—how hard everything was for him — and that I'd be there — when he needed me! Oh-o-o-o-oh!"

Rosa waited calmly for this fresh burst of grief to subside. Then she said, "How do you mean, hard? I never figured Jess had things so hard."

"How can you say that! Him being an orphan and nobody to care about him all his life!"

"Don't see how you figure that. Seems to me Corley was as good as any father would-a been. Heap sight better than his own Pa. And ever'buddy allus liked Jess. He had a place any table he chose to set. Where'd you get such a notion? He complain?"

"Oh, no! But it was — it was all there, right there in that book — no matter what they say!"

"Hah!" Rosa drew herself up triumphantly. "Makin' yourself look foolish like everyone else! That book was wrote before that woman knew one person from another in Two River — every line of it. I got the word of the folks that printed it for her. All she done after she moved here was to go over it, correctin' the grammar, and get it copied off. But here we all was, so full of ourselves we got to see our own faces on every page. I never heard-a such—"

She stopped, and again looked with a kind of half pity upon the trembling girl.

"You ain't the only one, I'll say that. So there's no need to feel too dumb. Any day Roxie Drumheller makes such a fool of herself—"

She patted the girl's shoulder clumsily.

"Now. It's done with. There'll be plenty of other fellers, and next time you'll have more sense."

Privately she doubted this. But she gave Janie, awkwardly, what comfort she could, and eventually the girl left, still snuffling a little but no longer sobbing.

Rosa looked after her and thought, well, land knows it ain't too surprising when you consider her Ma. If she hadn't got a-holt of a sensible, even-dispositioned fellow like George, land knows what she'd be by now. When she thought back about her and Hart Connors.

LAMELY, jerkily, the shuttle of Rosa's mind began to follow its pattern. She went about her work, put out the lights in the kitchen and when she saw that the bar was deserted still, decided she would not stay down tonight. She was tired with bone-deep fatigue that had been weeks in the making. Any customers come later, Ed could handle them.

She set the buzzer on the barroom door and stuck her head into the men's parlor long enough to tell Ed she was going up. Then she mounted the stairs to the third floor.

She did not turn on the light in her room nor, for a time, make any move to undress. She walked over to the window and stood looking out over Two River Junction whose lights were beginning to dim already because of the rising mist. Yet she knew every light, and began to say the names in her mind, a soothing litany.

It was all over; she knew that. From now on things would begin to go as always. The climax had been reached and passed, and everything would settle down, as the stirred-up dirt in a pond settles, after a storm, to the bottom again, where it belongs.

As she looked down upon the village, the Armory clock began to boom out the hour and, immediately, the little clock at Hartling's.

As always, Jonathan and Lucy sprang to Rosa's mind, and then Eve Larch. Eve was gone from Two River for good and Jonathan was dead. She, Rosa, had caused it and would always know that she had.

Bunch of foolishness, she told herself sharply. Folks actin' like crazy things; nobody could be held accountable.

But the sense of her own guilt did not leave her as she heard the clocks out. Rosa had never made excuses in her mind for anyone else; she found she could not do so for herself.

Things would settle. But there would always be something to remind her. The two clocks; Lucy Bricker in black (she would probably wear black the rest of her life); all the other things that would make her remember.

She stood for a moment longer in the dark room by the window, hovering like an unseen deity over Two River Junction. Then, heavily, she turned and began to get ready for bed.

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